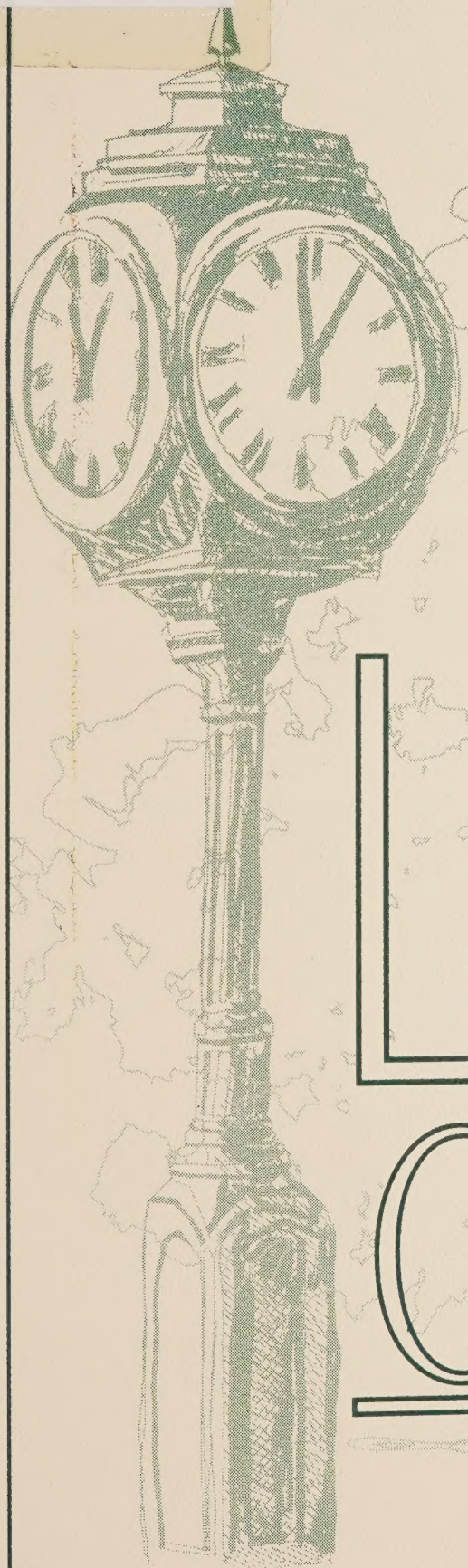


2003 0518

IGSL



LOS ALTOS GENERAL PLAN

CITY OF LOS ALTOS



CITY COUNCIL

Francis La Poll, Mayor
Kris Casto, Mayor Pro Tem
Lou Becker
King Lear
John Moss

PLANNING COMMISSION

Phoebe Bressack, Commissioner
Curtis Cole, Chairperson
Kate Disney, Vice Chairperson
Phoebe Bressack, Commissioner
Katia Kamangar, Commissioner
Penny Lave, Commissioner
John Ritchie, Commissioner
Bruce Skov, Commissioner

GENERAL PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Abigail Ahrens
Michael Adler
Tom Anderson
Roger Anderson
Jon Baer
Bill Crook
Matt Cuson
Guy Cutler
Paul Foerster
Stephanie Lin
Nancy Lippe
Cindy Luedtke
Paul Van Buren
Marie Young

CITY STAFF

Phil Rose, City Manager
Starla Jerome-Robinson, Asst City Manager
James Walgren, Community Development Director
Jim Porter, Public Works Director
Dave Brees, Recreation Director
Don Johnson, Police Chief
Marc Hynes, City Attorney
Carol Scharz, City Clerk

CONSULTANTS TO THE CITY IN PREPARATION OF THE GENERAL PLAN

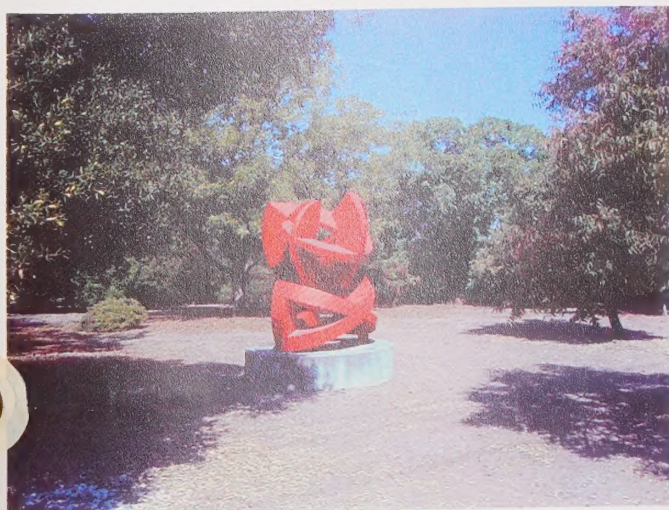
COTTON/BRIDGES/ASSOCIATES
Urban Planning and Environmental Consultants
Pasadena, Sacramento and San Diego

Fehr & Peers Associates - Circulation
Wieland Associates - Noise

INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENTAL
STUDIES LIBRARY

AUG 22 2003

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026 with funding from
State of California and California State Library

<https://archive.org/details/C124877413>

CONTENTS

Introduction

Community Design & Historic Resources Element

Land Use Element

Housing Element

Economic Development Element

Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

Circulation Element

Natural Environment & Hazards Element

Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element

Appendices

A: Glossary

B: City of Los Altos Transportation Charrette

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL PLAN

Today, Los Altos is a community grounded in the unique history of its agricultural and railroad culture, yet it is also a community of the 21st century that is prepared to face the challenges ahead. To meet these challenges, the General Plan for Los Altos is the primary source of long-range planning and policy direction that will be used to guide growth and preserve the quality of life within the community.

Since the last comprehensive update of the General Plan in 1987, there have been relatively minor changes to the established community of Los Altos, but many significant changes to the surrounding region. According to the previous General Plan, the population of Los Altos in 1987 was 27,189 persons. Census data for 2000 shows Los Altos with a population of 27,693 persons, representing less than two percent growth over the 13-year period. Comparatively, the population of Santa Clara County and surrounding communities grew at a rate between 12 and 18 percent in the same period.

After the economic recession of the early 1990s, Santa Clara County (Silicon Valley) grew quickly, driven by the new information technology surrounding the internet. Development trends included large employment centers, regional retail centers, and new neighborhoods along major transportation routes. This type of growth commonly required larger, primarily undeveloped land, with infrastructure capacity for this scale of development. As an established community with primarily residential use, small neighborhood commercial areas, and few undeveloped parcels, Los Altos would not easily accommodate this type or scale of employment and housing growth. Thus, unlike many of the surrounding communities over the past 15 years, Los Altos did not undergo substan-

tial change. Rather, the City focused its planning efforts toward managing and enhancing existing character and land use patterns. Planning will now focus on stimulating new economic growth, revitalizing older areas, assuring public safety, finding new uses for underutilized land, and enhancing the amenities and environmental resources that define Los Altos.

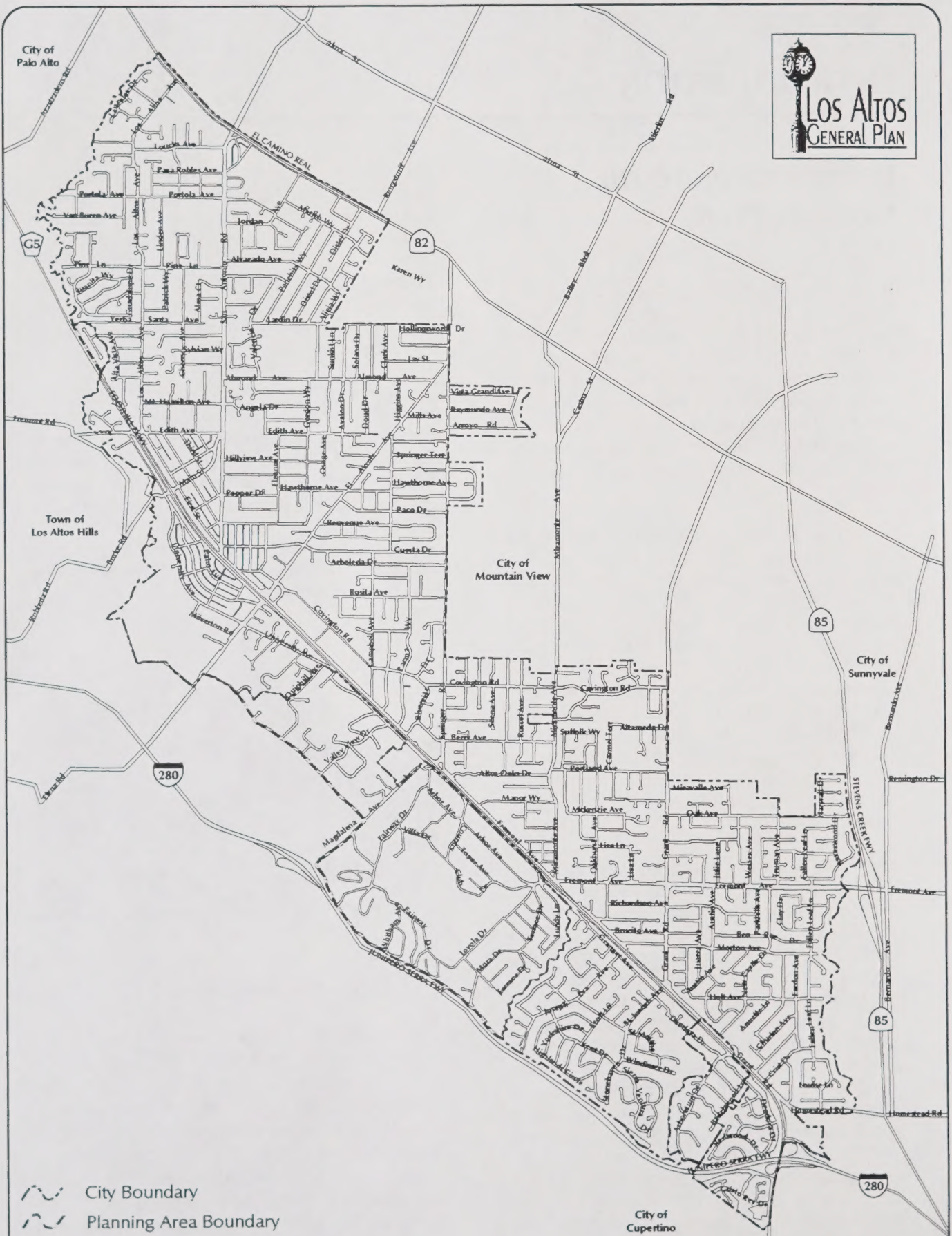
The General Plan is founded upon the community's vision for the City and expresses the community's long-term goals. Implementation of the General Plan will ensure that future development is consistent with the community's goals and that adequate urban services are available to meet the needs of new development. The General Plan provides a continuum between the City's unique traditions and the Los Altos of tomorrow.



LOS ALTOS PLANNING AREA

The geographical area addressed by a General Plan is not limited to a City's corporate limits. State law requires the City to plan for areas outside of its immediate jurisdiction if the areas have a direct relationship to its planning needs. The Los Altos planning area includes the entire incorporated City and unincorporated land areas within the City's Sphere of Influence. Unincorporated

City of
Palo Alto



- City Boundary
- Planning Area Boundary

Source: City of Los Altos GIS.

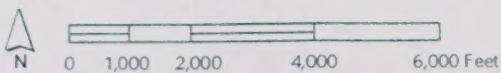


Figure I-1
Los Altos Planning Area



City's Sphere of Influence. Unincorporated land areas in Santa Clara County abut the City's southern and southwestern boundaries.

The Los Altos planning area is located in the northwest portion of Santa Clara County, approximately five miles west of San Francisco Bay at the southern end of the peninsula. Los Altos is surrounded by Mountain View and Palo Alto to the north, Sunnyvale to the east, Cupertino to the south, and Los Altos Hills to the west. Figure I-1 depicts the planning area for Los Altos.

HISTORY OF THE COMMUNITY

The community of Los Altos can trace its roots back to the Ohlone and Muwekma Indians, who resided along the area creeks in the early twentieth century. Most of the region was agriculturally based until the development of the railroad. The origins of urban Los Altos began in 1907 with the creation of the town plan centered around the Southern Pacific Railway Station in what is now the Downtown. Several commercial buildings were developed prior to 1940, surrounded by residential use, ranches, and agriculture.

Most of the land within the City's existing boundaries was developed in the two decades following City incorporation in 1952.

VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF LOS ALTOS

The Vision for the Future provides the foundation of the General Plan and an expression of what the City of Los Altos wants to maintain or become over the next two decades:

In the year 2020, the City of Los Altos continues to support a community-focused lifestyle for its residents, promoted and celebrated through neighborhood and community activities and involvement. The small town atmosphere, enhanced by the village character of the

Downtown and other neighborhood commercial centers, also contributes to this friendly community spirit.

New development and redevelopment is compatible with and sensitive to the existing community. New development reflects the existing small town, semi-rural character of the community with its Downtown commercial area and wooded, quiet, low density residential neighborhoods. People feel safe in their neighborhoods, commercial districts, and schools. In addition, the quality of the City's environmental, open space, and scenic resources is preserved and enhanced. Recreational opportunities are available to meet the needs of all members of the community.

The local circulation system meets the needs of the community while slowing and reducing the amount of traffic in residential neighborhoods and near schools. Within this circulation system, pedestrians and cyclists are able to travel safely and quickly throughout the community.

Appropriate commercial and office uses locate and thrive, providing fiscal stability to the City and a revenue source to finance community improvements. These beneficial businesses operate in harmony with surrounding residential neighborhoods and contribute to the small town atmosphere. Downtown is the city center for traditional events and festivals that serve the entire Los Altos community. Downtown provides goods and services, restaurants, and entertainment for all age groups in our community. The town is active in the evenings as well as during the weekdays and weekends. The streets and sidewalks are clean, and landscaping is attractive. The competition to locate retail businesses Downtown is keen.

A variety of housing options are available to meet the needs of all segments of the community, including the local workforce, residents' children, and the elderly. Mixed-use housing is available and affordable for workers in Los Altos including teachers, City employees, and other members of the local workforce.



Other assets, such as the high quality of the local education system, as well as the City's agricultural past with its historic buildings and remaining orchards, are important to the community. Existing development is well maintained so that Los Altos remains an attractive and enjoyable place to live, work, and play.

PURPOSE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

California law requires each city to adopt a comprehensive, long-term General Plan to guide the physical development of the incorporated city and land outside city boundaries that bears a relationship to its planning activities. Fundamentally, the General Plan serves as a blueprint for future growth and development. As such, the plan contains policies and programs designed to provide decision makers with a solid foundation for land use and development decisions.

The Los Altos General Plan represents the values and outlines the vision of the community. The Plan organizes the desires of Los Altos residents with respect to the physical, social, economic, and environmental character of the City. It embodies what the City is now and what it hopes to be in 2020.

In accordance with California Government Code Section 65302, a general plan must address the issues of land use, circulation, housing, noise, safety, conservation, and open space. These issues are discussed in the General Plan to the extent that they apply to Los Altos. The Plan also addresses topics of special and unique interest, including community design, economic development, community facilities, infrastructure, and waste disposal. These topics are optional, but reflect issues that are important to the community.

According to state law, the General Plan is the primary document the City utilizes to regulate land use. Consequently, the Zoning Ordinance, Specific Plans, and individual public and private development proposals must be consistent with the Plan goals, policies, and standards.



ORGANIZATION AND USE OF THE GENERAL PLAN

The Los Altos General Plan contains goals, policies and plans which are intended to guide land use and development decisions through the year 2020. There are eight individual elements of this Plan, which fulfill the state requirements for a General Plan. Table I-1 shows the relationship between the eight elements of the Los Altos General Plan and the state-mandated elements.

Plan Organization and Use

The General Plan is comprised of this Introduction and eight elements. Each element is a distinct, but integral part of the General Plan. The General Plan is accompanied by a Glossary (Appendix A). Each of the elements is organized according to the following format: (1) Introduction; (2) Plan; (3) Issues, Goals, and Policies; and (4) Implementation Programs Appendix.



TABLE I-1
RELATIONSHIP OF LOS ALTOS GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS TO STATE-MANDATED ELEMENTS

Los Altos General Plan Elements	Land Use	Housing	Circulation	Safety	Conservation	Open Space	Noise	Optional
Community Design & Historic Resources								■
Land Use	■							
Housing		■						
Economic Development								■
Open Space, Conservation, & Community Facilities					■	■		■
Circulation			■					
Natural Environment & Hazards				■			■	
Infrastructure & Waste Disposal								■

The Introduction of each element describes the focus and the purpose of the element. The Introduction also identifies other Related Laws, Plans and Programs outside of the General Plan that may be used to achieve or relate to specific General Plan goals. The relationship of the element to other General Plan elements is also described in the Introduction.

The Issues, Goals, and Policies section of each element contains a description of identified planning issues, goals and policies related to the element topic. The issues, goals and policies are based on input received from community workshops; members of the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC); members of the City Council and Planning Commission; and City staff.

The issues represent the opportunities, constraints or concerns that are addressed by the General Plan. The goals are overall state-

ments of community desires and are comprised of broad statements of purpose or direction. The policies serve as guides to the decision makers in reviewing development proposals and making other decisions that affect the future growth and development of Los Altos.

Each element also contains a Plan section. The Plan provides background information regarding existing conditions and an overview of the City's course of action to implement the identified goals and policies. For example, the Land Use Element contains a "Land Use Plan" indicating the types and intensities of land use permitted in Los Altos.

The Implementation Programs Appendix identifies specific actions to achieve the goals, policies and plans identified in each General Plan element. The Implementation Programs Appendix is reviewed and updated periodically to update specific actions, schedules,



responsible parties and measures to ensure that General Plan goals, policies and plans are implemented. The Glossary (Appendix A of the General Plan) provides a set of definitions for technical terms used in the Plan.

The organization of the General Plan allows users to easily locate issues of interest and quickly obtain a perspective on the City's policies on the subject. However, General Plan users should realize that the policies in the various elements are interrelated and should be examined comprehensively. Policies are presented as written statements, tables, diagrams and maps. All of these policy components must be considered together when making planning decisions.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN THE GENERAL PLAN PROGRAM

Public participation played an important role in updating the Los Altos General Plan. Because the General Plan reflects the community goals and objectives, citizen input is essential to identifying issues, formulating goals, and creating the City's vision for 2020. Public participation and education during the General Plan program occurred through the following methods:

- ❖ In the Fall of 1996, prior to project kick-off, the City conducted a community visioning process called the **Community Compass**. The goal of the visioning process was to help the community determine what it wants to be in the future (2020) and what is needed to achieve its vision. Information from the Community Compass report was used in developing the preliminary set of issues for the General Plan.
- ❖ Early in the program, the City hosted a **Transportation Charrette** with Dan Burden and his team from Walkable Communities, Inc. The purpose of the workshop series (including a walking tour) was to educate the community on key transportation issues and possible solutions to carry forward to the General Plan vision and circulation-related goals and policies.
- ❖ Three **Community Workshops** were held during the General Plan program. The first General Plan Community Workshop was held to discuss the key community issues and opportunities that should be reflected in the framework of the General Plan. At the second Community Workshop, the consultant team solicited input on land use and circulation alternatives. At the final Community Workshop, the Preliminary Draft General Plan was presented to the public for consideration.
- ❖ The City Council appointed a **General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC)** to represent stakeholders and provide input and recommendations during the General Plan program. Five meetings were held with the GPAC. The first meeting was a program initiation for the purpose of introducing the General Plan program and soliciting input regarding community issues and future vision. The second meeting was held to review and discuss preliminary draft goals and policies. At the third and fourth meetings, the GPAC continued review of the goals and policies and discussed land use and circulation alternatives. The final GPAC meeting was held to review the Preliminary Draft General Plan and provide recommendations to the City's decision makers.
- ❖ Two General Plan program **newsletters** were prepared during the program. These newsletters provided the public updated information on the status of the General Plan program, upcoming workshop schedules, methods for public comment, and a summary of the pro-



posed General Plan. Newsletters were distributed to all Los Altos residents.

- ❖ The City also utilized its **website** to provide current information on the General Plan program. Both newsletters were posted on the website.
- ❖ The public had the opportunity to address decision makers directly regarding issues, concerns, and desires at three joint **City Council/Planning Commission Workshops**. The first of these workshops was an introduction to the General Plan program and a review of the draft vision statement generated with input from the GPAC. The second joint workshop allowed decision-makers the opportunity to provide direction on the issues, goals and policies to be included in the Draft General Plan, as well as direction on the land use and circulation alternative to be used as the basis of the Draft General Plan. Once the preliminary Draft General Plan was completed, the third joint workshop was held to review that plan and incorporate City Council and Planning Commission comments into the Draft General Plan prior to public hearings.
- ❖ The Draft General Plan and Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration were circulated for public review and comment, before and during the **General Plan public hearings** held before the City Council and Planning Commission prior to adoption of the updated General Plan.



WAY TO THE FUTURE

The General Plan provides the way to achieve the future the community has identified for itself. Direction is established in the General Plan to take advantage of opportunities to achieve the community's goals for the future. The goals and policies in the elements and the Implementation Program provide guidance for dealing with changing conditions and specific actions to optimize community potential. The path established in the General Plan is an integrated union of the enduring historic values responsible for modern prosperity and innovative approaches to achieve the vision for the future.

COMMUNITY DESIGN AND
HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT



COMMUNITY DESIGN & HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Community Design & Historic Resources Element	1
Scope and Content of the Community Design & Historic Resources Element	1
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	1
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	3

COMMUNITY DESIGN & HISTORIC RESOURCES PLAN

Community Image and Identity	4
Historic Resources	8

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Community Design	10
Historic Resources	13

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

LIST OF FIGURES

CDHR-1 Important Entryways	6
----------------------------	---

COMMUNITY DESIGN & HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

The identity of Los Altos is predicated upon its small-town atmosphere as a mature residential community with a historic Downtown and neighborhood commercial centers. Defining physical attributes include relatively flat terrain, mature landscape, low-density residential neighborhoods, predominantly single-story structures, historic architecture, and the pedestrian-oriented village setting of the Downtown core. The Community Design & Historic Resources Element focuses on the protection and enhancement of these important attributes to maintain the City's distinct character.

PURPOSE OF THE COMMUNITY DESIGN & HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT

The Community Design & Historic Resources Element is an optional element under California law, rather than a mandatory element of the General Plan. The purpose of this Element is to define the urban form and character of the community, and to preserve and enhance its desirable visual qualities.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE COMMUNITY DESIGN & HISTORIC RESOURCES ELEMENT

The Community Design & Historic Resources Element is comprised of four sections: 1) Introduction; 2) the Community Design & Historic Resources Plan; 3) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs Appendix. The Plan provides background data and explains how the subsequent goals and policies will be achieved and implemented. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues related to the City's charac-

ter and history are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of community desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for working with local and regional agencies to preserve and enhance the identity and history of the community. The Implementation Programs Appendix identifies specific implementation programs for this Element.

RELATED LAWS, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

A number of existing plans and programs exist which directly relate to the goals of the Community Design & Historic Resources Element. Enacted through state and local action, these plans and programs are administered by agencies with responsibility for their enforcement.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in response to a public mandate for a thorough environmental analysis of projects that might adversely affect the environment. The provisions of the law, review procedure and any subsequent analysis are described in the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines as amended in 1998. Aesthetics (visual character) and historic resources are recognized as environmental impacts under CEQA.

National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)

Establishes laws for historic resources to preserve important historic, cultural, and natural aspects of our national heritage, and to maintain, wherever possible, an environment that supports diversity and a variety of individual choice. The Historic Sites Act of 1935 established national policy to preserve historic



sites, buildings, and objects of national, state and local significance.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is maintained by the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Offices. Structures and sites are eligible for listing on the National Register when they are a minimum of 50-years-old.

State Office of Historic Preservation

The State Office of Historic Preservation implements preservation laws regarding historic resources, and is responsible for the California Historic Resources Inventory (CHRI), which uses the National Criteria for listing resources significant at the national, state, and local level.

Tree Protection Regulations Ordinance

The City adopted an Ordinance for the protection of trees that are designated by City Council resolution, designated heritage tree by the Historical Commission, located on undeveloped or non-single-family residential property, or required to be saved by an entitlement. Removal of protected trees requires approval of a tree removal permit.

Historical Preservation Ordinance

Los Altos adopted a Historical Preservation Ordinance for the primary purposes of ensuring protection of irreplaceable historic resources, enhancing visual character through architectural compatibility, and encouraging appreciation of the City's past. The ordinance identifies the process and qualifications for the designation of a historic landmark or historic district.



Historical Commission

The purpose of the Historical Commission is to conduct the historic resources inventory and to advise the City Council and coordinate with other agencies on historic issues.

Downtown Urban Design Plan

In 1992, the City adopted the Downtown Urban Design Plan to reinforce the identity of downtown, to improve the visual quality of the area, and to create an attractive pedestrian environment.

Certified Local Government

As a certified local government (CLG), Los Altos can participate with State and federal governments in the historic preservation process. Through this status, the City gains access to technical training and assistance, and also qualifies to apply for federal grants.

State Historic Building Code

The State Historic Building Code provides alternative regulations for the rehabilitation, preservation, restoration, or relocation of structures designated as qualified historic buildings.



California Mills Act

The Mills Act permits local governments in California to provide for a reduction in property taxes on historic properties when certain conditions are met.

Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) Ordinance

In 2000, a City Council-appointed committee conducted a series of study sessions and developed provisions for the Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) zoning district, applicable to property located in the commercial core of Downtown. The City subsequently adopted provisions for the CRS zoning district intended to retain and enhance the village atmosphere and pedestrian-oriented environment of the Downtown.

Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines

The City adopted Design Guidelines for single-family residential development in 1991 to guide the homeowner, architect, developer and builder in the planning and execution of successful single-family residential design. The primary purpose is to maintain the physical attributes of existing residential neighborhoods in Los Altos.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

According to state planning law, the Community Design & Historic Resources Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. While all of the elements are interdependent, they are also interrelated to a degree. Certain goals and policies of one element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of issues throughout the General Plan creates a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Community Design &

Historic Resources Element is most directly related to the Land Use, Housing, Circulation, and Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Elements.



COMMUNITY DESIGN & HISTORIC RESOURCES PLAN

Los Altos contains many natural and man-made features that form the City's unique physical character. By addressing these features in its General Plan, the community has the opportunity to conserve and develop a series of interrelated environments that enhance the traditional character of the City. The Community Design & Historic Resources Plan develops a design framework to guide future development and redevelopment to ensure continuity of the community's character and identity.

COMMUNITY IMAGE AND IDENTITY

This section of the Plan describes the City's character, as defined by its residents, and predominant community design features.

Community Compass

The City conducted a community visioning process in the Fall of 1996 called the Community Compass. The goal of the visioning process was to help the community determine what it wants to be in the future (2020) and what is needed to achieve its vision.

The process involved over 60 participants selected as a representative cross section of the City. The group was presented with quality of life community characteristics, then facilitators worked with small groups to evaluate the implementation level, quality and priority for identified community-building strategies. The top-ranked strategies were categorized, refined and prioritized. Each participant then voted for their top three short- and long-term priorities. The five highest ranked community characteristics were as follows:

- 1) Safety in the Downtown area.
- 2) Safety in neighborhoods.
- 3) Safety in families.
- 4) Quality of life for senior residents.
- 5) Sense of community identity among residents.

Participants also identified re-occurring themes in the community-building strategies. Re-occurring themes included balanced development (village atmosphere vs. new development), community involvement, neighborhood preservation, public safety, quality education, and youth development.

In terms of relevance to the Community Design & Historic Resources Plan, the Community Compass demonstrated the need to better define/describe the village atmosphere that distinguishes Los Altos from other communities and the desire to preserve neighborhoods. These same concepts were identified in the community survey for the 1987 General Plan, which was used to gauge desirable community qualities at that time. Survey results highlighted the small town village atmosphere and low-density neighborhoods as the community's most important attributes and concluded that the residents did not want to see significant changes over the subsequent ten-year period.

Community Design

As a developed community with a well-established land use pattern, Los Altos is unlikely to change in any significant way. The City is predominantly residential, with limited commercial, park, and public lands. See the Land Use Element for land use acreages and designations throughout the planning area.

Los Altos describe their City as an established small-town, single-family residential community with mature landscaping, a charming Downtown, and neighborhood commercial services. The residents cherish their quality of life and want to preserve and enhance the City's unique identity.

Distinctive community design features are listed below, along with existing and planned efforts to reinforce these unique qualities.

Landscape. Los Altos has a relatively flat terrain with mature trees and landscape. Significant groves of trees are located in open space areas, and along the creek corridors. Tree-lined collector and arterial streets are characteristic throughout the community. The City even has a few remnants of orchards. Tree protection regulations have been adopted to increase the level of City review for removal of trees, particularly those that have been granted special designation or approved for preservation.

Entryways/Gateways. Los Altos is surrounded by other developed communities in Santa Clara County, including Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Cupertino, Los Altos Hills, and Palo Alto. In an effort to emphasize the unique characteristics of Los Altos that distinguish it from surrounding cities, the City will continue to develop attractive gateway features at the primary entrances to the City. Gateway features will be characteristic of the City and include enhanced landscape. See Figure CDHR-1 for the locations of primary and secondary entryways.

Property Design and Consistency. Because the majority of the City was developed between 1950 and 1970, there is consistency in the development patterns and architectural appearance throughout the residential community.

This development embodied a rural atmosphere with quarter- and half-acre lots, one- and two-structures, and extensive landscaping. While most of the land has been developed for some time, the City adopted regulations and guidelines throughout the 1990s to ensure that new development and modifications to existing development are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and integrate well within the fabric of the community. Development and design review does not mandate the duplication of elements or styles. Rather, the processes encourage design integrity and respect for the physical qualities and character of residential neighborhoods and commercial developments.



Residential Design. Over 82 percent of the City's land is designated for housing, the majority of which are low-density single-family lots with 10,000 square foot minimum lot sizes. Most neighborhoods were developed in the 1950s with single-story "California Ranch" style homes on spacious lots fronting streets exclusive of curb, gutter and sidewalks.

As the population of the Bay Area swelled, housing demand pushed up housing prices and land values. Building lots became considerably more expensive and by the 1970s, buyers/builders maximized the use of their high-cost land by building larger, two-story

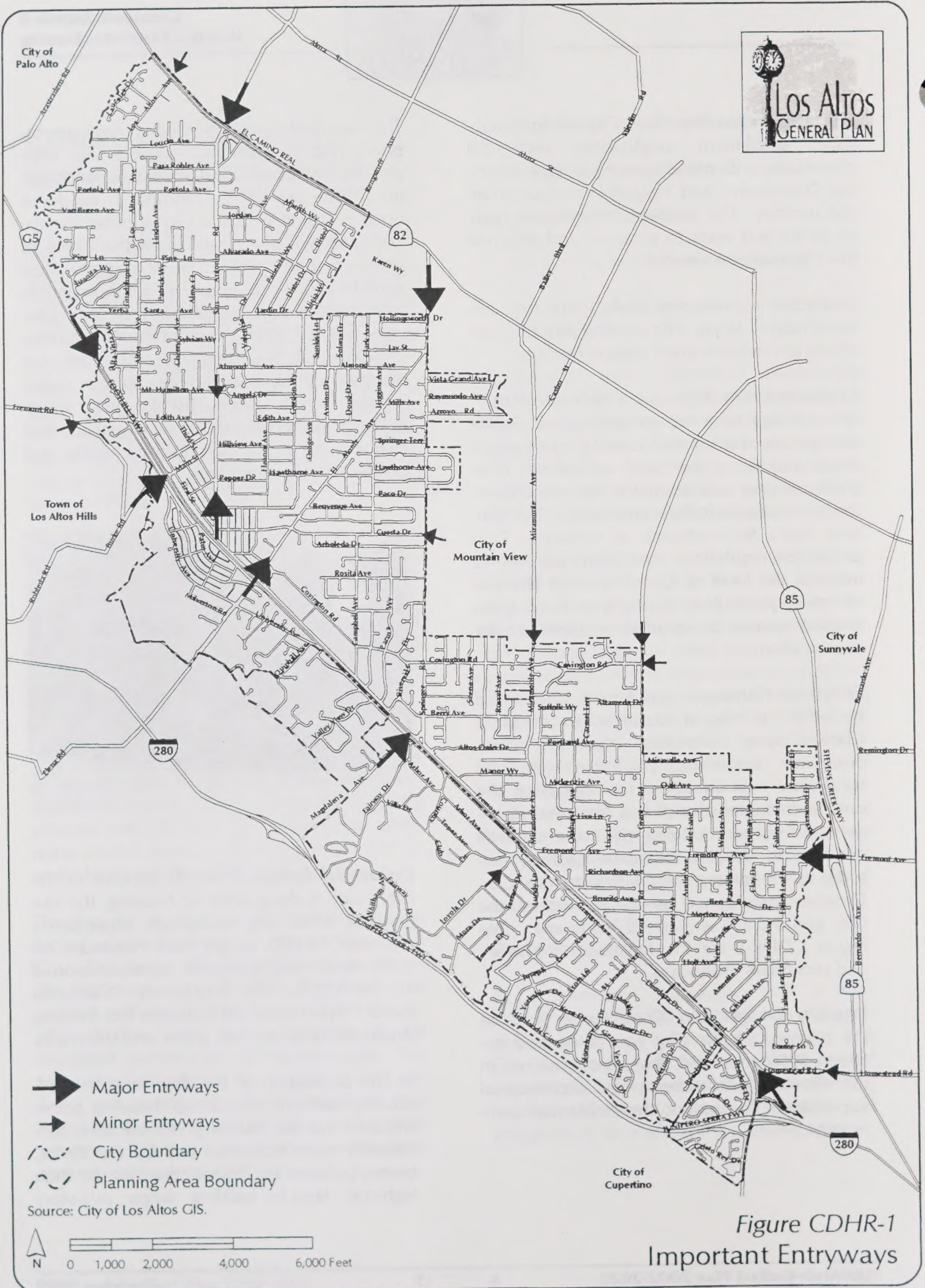


Figure CDHR-1
Important Entryways



homes and subdividing larger property. In an effort to address the concerns that this change would negatively alter the character of the community, the City adopted Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines. Continued enforcement and refinement of these criteria and design review processes will ensure the compatibility of new development and modifications to existing development.

Commercial Design. Commercial design characteristics are distinct for the three types of commercial developments in the City: Downtown; El Camino Real corridor; and neighborhood commercial centers. Figure ED-1 in the Economic Development Element shows the location of each identified commercial area.

Downtown. The Downtown area was planned in 1907 as the center of commerce for Los Altos along the Southern Pacific railroad right-of-way that is now Foothill Expressway. Several commercial and civic buildings were developed along First, Second, Main, and State Streets in the 1910s and 1920s. Without significant historic preservation efforts, the Downtown area has maintained its historic buildings and continued to develop in a pattern reflective of the City's past. Significant development and design characteristics of Downtown are as follows:

- ❖ Walkable, triangular area with a distinct small lot pattern and edges created by its boundaries along San Antonio Road, Foothill Expressway, and Edith Avenue;
- ❖ Almost 20 historic buildings originally developed prior to 1940;
- ❖ Commercial core with small-town village atmosphere created by one- and two-story buildings that have contiguous 25-foot-wide storefronts with large display windows, streetscape furniture on wide sidewalks with a variety of overhangs, awnings, and tree canopies;

- ❖ Pedestrian-friendly development with street furniture and outdoor seating along sidewalks, enhanced pavement at crosswalks, tree-lined streets, landscaped intersections, and pedestrian walkways/plazas;
- ❖ Mix of uses emphasizing retail businesses and services which meets the needs of both residents and visitors;
- ❖ Parking plazas; and
- ❖ Additional commercial and cultural activities that create a community gathering and meeting place.

In 1992, the City adopted the Downtown Urban Design Plan to reinforce the identity of downtown as a retail center, to improve the visual quality of the area, and to create an attractive pedestrian environment. In 2001, City Council adopted special use provisions and specific design criteria for the Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) Zoning District to retain and enhance the village atmosphere and pedestrian-oriented environment of Downtown's commercial core. Implementation of these plans and regulations will ensure the preservation and enhancement of this community treasure.





El Camino Real Corridor. The El Camino Real commercial corridor is located along the City's northern edge, shared with the Cities of Mountain View and Palo Alto. Commercial property abutting this six-lane arterial road has been identified in the Land Use Element as one of the few areas with underutilized land and potential to redevelop or intensify existing development without jeopardizing the small-town residential character of the City.

Most of the existing development along the corridor is diverse in mass and scale, type of development, and architectural style. Development intensity in the City sharply contrasts with the large-scale, multiple-story buildings on the north side of El Camino Real in Mountain View. New land use policies for this corridor discourage exclusive office use, but encourage retail use on the ground floor and residential components with development incentives. Future development consistent with these policies should create more uniformity in the physical development pattern along the corridor. However, to improve the aesthetics and create a more pedestrian-friendly environment in the corridor, the City should work with surrounding communities to develop an improvement plan for El Camino Real streetscape including sidewalks, streetlights, street furniture, landscape, and signs.

El Camino Real serves as a gateway to Los Altos from the north at San Antonio Road. At this intersection, there are two commercial centers on either side of San Antonio Road: Sherwood Gateway and Village Court. The City has long identified a desire to improve the aesthetics at this important intersection. In 1998, the City adopted the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan to revitalize this area. The Specific Plan comprehensively addresses land use, circulation and parking, site planning, and design guidelines for the 26-acres east of the intersection of El Camino Real and San Antonio Road. Future development in compliance with this Specific Plan will ensure greater

harmony in site development and architectural style at the City's northern gateway.

Neighborhood Commercial Centers. In addition to the Downtown and El Camino Real commercial areas, there are five other neighborhood commercial centers in Los Altos as follows:

- ❖ Loyola Corners
- ❖ Rancho Shopping Center
- ❖ Woodland Plaza
- ❖ Foothill Plaza

These projects are all smaller pedestrian-oriented developments, which provide services to the surrounding neighborhoods. Most of the centers are located along Foothill Expressway. From a design perspective, the City wants to ensure that these projects are visually and functionally compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. A Specific Plan was adopted for Loyola Corners in 1990 to address these issues. Future development in compliance with adopted criteria will ensure the compatibility and vitality of these neighborhood commercial centers.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Los Altos has an archaeological heritage as well as historic resources from the early twentieth century. The Ohlone and Muwekma Indian tribes made their homes at several creekside locations in the area. Past construction has unearthed some significant archaeological findings with evidence of prehistoric habitation and burial sites.

In 1906, the Southern Pacific railway sought a new shipping and passenger depot along the hills west of Mountain View. An associated company, the Interurban Electric, purchased the Winchester Rifle family farm which today is the Los Altos Downtown Triangle. In 1907, the Los Altos Land Company laid out the town in the midst of ranches and orchards. By 1920, the community was well established and centered around the Southern Pacific

Railway Station. A number of historic buildings remain from that era and contribute to the character and identity of Los Altos.



As previously mentioned, there are almost 20 historic buildings in Downtown that were originally developed prior to 1940. There are also several historic residential structures located west of Downtown between Foothill Expressway and Adobe Creek. These buildings are an important component of the "Los Altos look." To maintain the present feel and appearance of the community requires protecting and preserving these buildings, as well as protecting their flanks from encroachment by out-of-scale and out-of-character buildings.

Current regulations protect designated landmarks. There are approximately 10 officially designated historic landmarks, located mostly in Downtown. To identify resources for potential preservation, the Los Altos Historical Commission completed a Historic Resources Inventory in 1997. The City's desire is to respect historic structures and to identify significant structures for preservation, while respecting private property rights, including reasonable economic use.



ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

The visual character of Los Altos, an established low-density residential community with mature landscape and small neighborhood commercial areas, distinguishes it from surrounding communities in Silicon Valley. This character is also established through predominantly low profile, single-story structures and historic Downtown development.

Five major issues addressed by the plan, goals and policies of the Community Design & Historic Resources Element are as follows:

- 1) Community identity;
- 2) Downtown;
- 3) El Camino Real;
- 4) Neighborhood commercial centers; and
- 5) Historic resources.

Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Element.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Los Altos enjoys a small town character with low-density residential neighborhoods, a charming Downtown, and several neighborhood commercial centers. Distinctive design features are as follows:

- ❖ Relatively flat terrain with mature trees and landscape;
- ❖ Established low-density residential neighborhoods, many having streets without sidewalks;

- ❖ Predominantly low profile, single-story structures throughout the community;
- ❖ Tree-lined collector and arterial streets leading to commercial and public activities;
- ❖ Vital Downtown core with village atmosphere created by contiguous storefronts, wide sidewalks, and pedestrian plazas reflective of traditional historic commercial development; and
- ❖ Smaller neighborhood commercial centers developed at a human scale that is pedestrian-friendly.

Collectively, these features create a unique character and identity that is cherished by its residents. While the City has successfully developed land use, development, and design regulations, continued preservation and enhancement of the City's unique features is critical to the quality of life for Los Altos residents.

Goal 1: Preserve and enhance the identity and unique character of Los Altos.

Policy 1.1: Preserve trees, especially heritage and landmark trees, and trees that protect privacy in residential neighborhoods.

Policy 1.2: Encourage the addition of a variety of trees and landscaping to enhance streetscape and slow traffic.

Policy 1.3: Require owners to maintain unpaved public rights-of-way and walkways clear of vegetation overhang that impedes movement or causes a safety hazard.

Policy 1.4: Promote pride in community and excellence in design in



conjunction with attention to and compatibility with existing residential and commercial environments.

Policy 1.5: Continue to protect the privacy of neighbors and minimize the appearance of bulk in new homes and additions to existing homes.

Policy 1.6: Continue to provide for site planning and architectural design review within the City, with a focus on mass, scale, character, and materials.

Policy 1.7: Enhance neighborhood character by promoting architectural design of new homes, additions to existing homes, and residential developments that is compatible in the context of surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy 1.8: Consider neighborhood desires regarding the character of future development through the establishment of development or design regulations.

Policy 1.9: Promote diverse opportunities for public gathering and celebrations that foster a feeling of community.

Policy 1.10: Continue to develop opportunities for public engagement in civic events and encourage greater community involvement by all Los Altos.

Policy 1.11: Develop attractive gateways to the City that emphasize the unique characteristics of Los Altos that distinguish it from

surrounding cities, including enhanced landscape.

Goal 2: Provide adequate street lighting where appropriate within the community.

Policy 2.1: Continue to encourage streetlights at all major intersections and around public places, such as schools and parks.

Policy 2.2: Allow neighborhood-by-neighborhood determination of street lighting needs.

Downtown

The Downtown area is the traditional heart of the community. Residents enjoy the small town, village character of the Downtown, where the scale and pattern of development creates a pedestrian-friendly environment. Community events help to promote the village character of the area, attracting residents to participate and know each other. By attracting businesses that provide needed services to residents, as well as encouraging additional restaurants and entertainment venues, the Downtown area will continue to thrive.

Goal 3: Increase the appeal of Downtown to pedestrians and shoppers.

Policy 3.1: Retain and enhance the small-town village atmosphere throughout the Downtown.

Policy 3.2: Encourage the maintenance, upgrading, and new design of building exteriors, signs, passageways, and streetscape elements that enhance the pedestrian experience, reflect quality design, present a diversity of appearances, and contribute to the architectural and historical interest of the village.



Policy 3.3: Encourage pedestrian and bicycle-oriented design in the Downtown.

Policy 3.4: Encourage the use of open space in the Downtown for community events and public gatherings.

Policy 3.5: Continue to encourage the creative and safe incorporation of street furniture and hardscape into the design of public rights-of-way.

Policy 3.6: Evaluate the public benefit of City-owned parking plazas and the best use thereof, while preserving or increasing public parking Downtown.

Policy 3.7: Continue the existing contiguous building pattern within the Downtown core (Main and State Streets) by discouraging the merging of lots, preserving the contiguous 25-foot-wide storefronts, and encouraging two-story mixed use development.

Policy 3.8: Encourage the development of affordable housing above the ground floor throughout the Downtown.

El Camino Real Commercial Corridor

The El Camino Real commercial corridor is located along the northern edge of the City, functioning as a gateway to Los Altos from Palo Alto and Mountain View. Existing development includes freestanding offices, restaurants, and lodging facilities, along with commercial retail and service centers of various scale and mass. As identified in the Land Use and Economic Development Elements, this six-lane arterial corridor is one of the few

areas in the City with underutilized land and existing development that is prime for redevelopment. Thus, the El Camino Real corridor is one of the few areas in the City with the potential for land use intensification.

The visual character of the corridor is disjointed and architecturally diverse. Development along the north side of El Camino Real in Mountain View includes more intense commercial development with larger properties and taller structures. Goals and policies in the Land Use Element encourage mixed-use development throughout the corridor and allow consideration of an increase from two- to three-stories for projects including residential development. New development and redevelopment in the corridor will create a more pedestrian environment that can be visually and functionally more inviting to residents and visitors.

Goal 4: Improve the visual character of El Camino Real commercial area.

Policy 4.1: Develop a streetscape improvement plan for consistent development of the El Camino Real right-of-way.

Policy 4.2: Evaluate site development and design to ensure consistency in site design.

Policy 4.3: Evaluate development applications to ensure compatibility with residential neighborhoods south of the corridor.

Neighborhood Commercial Centers

Smaller commercial centers are located throughout the community, providing important commercial services to residents in the surrounding neighborhoods. As important features within the community, these neighborhood commercial centers are part of the visual appearance of the community.



Maintaining and improving their appearance helps maintain the overall character of the community and is beneficial for those local neighborhood businesses.

Goal 5: Maintain and enhance the attractiveness of neighborhood shopping centers and businesses throughout the community.

Policy 5.1: Promote and retain individual design themes in each center that reflect the established small-town character of the community.

Policy 5.2: Promote pedestrian-friendly site design, circulation, building orientation, parking, landscape, and site amenities (including pedestrian plazas, where feasible).

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Los Altos is a community that celebrates its agricultural history, as is demonstrated through its support of the Los Altos History Museum. This rich past has been incorporated into the fabric of the City and provides a link to the community's heritage and history. The remaining sites and structures of architectural and/or historic significance enhance the community's unique character and contribute to a sense of place. Areas within the City having historic resources and buildings should be protected since they can never be recovered once lost. In addition, while few archaeological resources remain because of the mature nature of the community, those that are encountered should be protected.

Goal 6: Preserve and enhance selected historic and cultural structures and resources within the community.

Policy 6.1: Ensure that the integrity of historic structures and the parcels on which they are located are preserved through the implementation of applicable design, building, and fire codes.

Policy 6.2: The City shall regard demolition of Landmark structures, and historically significant resources, which have HRI rankings of 60 to 100 as a last resort. Demolition would be permitted only after the City determines that the resource retains no reasonable economic use, that demolition is necessary to protect health, safety and welfare or that demolition is necessary to proceed with a new project where the benefits of the new project outweigh the loss of the historic resource.

Policy 6.3: Work with property owners to preserve historic resources within the community, including the orchard, or representative portion thereof, on the civic center site.

Policy 6.4: Preserve archaeological artifacts and sites found in Los Altos or mitigate disturbances to them, consistent with their intrinsic value.

Policy 6.5: Require an archaeological survey prior to the approval of significant development projects near creeksides or identified archaeological sites.



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

The Implementation Programs Appendix provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and plans for City elected officials, staff and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Programs are to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a measure, procedure, or technique that requires additional City action. This action may either occur on a City-wide basis or in specific areas within the City. The City Council, by relating the Implementation Programs to the General Plan, recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

Use of the General Plan Implementation Program

The Implementation Programs are intended for use in preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the California Government Code. Because some of the individual actions and programs described in the Implementation Programs Appendix act as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by Section 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This Implementation Programs Appendix may be updated annually with the budget process and whenever the City's

General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness.





COMMUNITY DESIGN & HISTORIC RESOURCES

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Community Design & Historic Resources Element. The Community Design & Historic Resources Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Community Design & Historic Resources Element.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

CDHR 1: Community Identity and Character

Enhance the City's unique identity and character by:

- 1) Maintaining the low density, low profile residential character of the community through zoning regulations and design guidelines;
- 2) Adopting and updating street design standards;
- 3) Preserving trees, especially those designated as heritage and landmark trees;
- 4) Implementing the street tree planting and management program with City approval for tree planting in street right-of-ways.
- 5) Encouraging the installation of planting medians along major arterial roadways as appropriate;
- 6) Continuing to require the undergrounding of utilities;
- 7) Promoting site planning and project design with an emphasis on small town scale and pedestrian friendly development;
- 8) Ensuring compatibility between residential and non-residential development through zoning regulations and design review;
- 9) Continuing to require a landscape strip along the back of properties abutting Foothill Expressway between Edith Avenue and San Antonio Road;
- 10) Developing distinguishing gateways to the City representative of its unique characteristics;
- 11) Encouraging community events throughout the City; and
- 12) Supporting public art through the Parks, Art, and Recreation Commission.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 3.1

CDHR 2: DESIGN REVIEW

Continue to conduct design review of residential and non-residential development to ensure compliance with applicable standards and guidelines, sound planning and good design practices, and compatibility with surrounding uses and development.



Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Architecture and Site Control Committee
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 4.2, 4.3

CDHR 3: TREE PROTECTION ORDINANCE

Implement the City's Tree Protection Ordinance, which establishes a process for designation of heritage and landmark trees and requires approval of tree removal permits for protected trees. Continue to recognize the protected status of trees designated by City Council resolution as heritage and/or landmark trees.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, City Council
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.2

CDHR 4: DOWNTOWN URBAN DESIGN PLAN

Implement the Downtown Urban Design Plan to preserve the unique character and pedestrian appeal of the Downtown by ensuring that future development and redevelopment in the Downtown is consistent with the plan.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7

CDHR 5: ENHANCE EL CAMINO REAL CORRIDOR

Establish standards for streetscape improvements along the El Camino Real Corridor to improve the pedestrian appeal and establish visual continuity throughout the corridor (e.g., street trees, sidewalk improvements).

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	2002 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2

CDHR 6: IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS

Enhance the City's neighborhood commercial centers by ensuring design consistency with established design themes, encouraging unifying design plans and improvements (e.g., signs, hardscape and landscape improvements), and promoting pedestrian-friendly site improvements (e.g., pedestrian plazas and walkways). Additionally, ensure that new development and redevelopment is consistent with any adopted Specific Plans or design plans for the commercial center.



Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund, Assessment Districts, private funds, Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 5.1, 5.2

CDHR 7: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Continue to involve the community in setting priorities and inform the community of opportunities to participate in activities, programs, and public hearings:

- 1) Promote activities that bring members of the community together for cultural and social events;
- 2) Establish ad hoc committees as necessary and appropriate to further community goals;
- 3) Use multiple venues for communication including newsletters, brochures, public notices, surveys, and the City's website; and
- 4) Recognize Los Altos citizens who have distinguished themselves and reflect pride in the City.

Responsible Agency/Department: City Manager, City Clerk
Funding Source: General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 1.9, 1.10, 3.4

CDHR 8: STREET LIGHTING

Continue to encourage street lighting at major intersections and public places and to consider additional lighting needs on a case-by-case basis.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund, Assessment District, Impact Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.1, 2.2

HISTORIC RESOURCES

CDHR 9: HISTORICAL PRESERVATION ORDINANCE

Implement the City's Historical Preservation Ordinance, which establishes criteria for the designation of historic landmarks and historic districts.

Responsible Agency/Department: Historical Commission, Community Development
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3



CDHR 10: HISTORIC RESOURCE INVENTORY

Continue to update the City's Historic Resource Inventory of potentially significant historic properties. Review the current list and determine if historic structures are significant for local or state designation as historic resources.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Historical Commission, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.2

CDHR 11: HISTORICAL COMMISSION REVIEW

Continue to require Historical Commission review of projects involving properties with an evaluated point total of 60 or more as determined in the current Historic Resource Inventory using established guidelines for selecting and ranking significant buildings. Historic Commission review shall be integrated into the design review process prior to building permit issuance or design review approval.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Historical Commission, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.2

CDHR 12: PRESERVE SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC RESOURCES

Assess development proposals for potential impacts to significant historic resources pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. For structures that potentially have historic significance, require a study conducted by a professional archaeologist or historian to determine the actual significance of the structure and potential impacts of the proposed development. Require modification of projects to avoid significant impacts, or require mitigation measures. Protect historical buildings and sites to the extent possible, including modifications to Uniform Code requirements for historic structures.

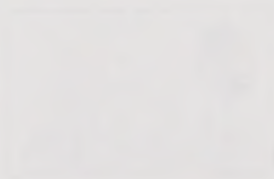
Responsible Agency/Department:	Historical Commission, Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.1, 6.2, 6.3

CDHR 13: PROTECT SIGNIFICANT ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Assess development proposals for potential impacts to significant archaeological resources pursuant to Section 15064.5 of the CEQA Guidelines. Require a study conducted by a professional archaeologist for projects located near creeks or identified archaeological sites to determine if significant archaeological resources are potentially present and if the project will significantly impact the resources. If significant impacts are identified, either require the project to be modified to avoid the impacts, or require measures to mitigate the impacts. Mitigation may involve archaeological investigation or recovery.



Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Funding Source: Development fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 6.4, 6.5



10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

10/10/10

LAND USE ELEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Land Use Element	1
Scope and Content of the Land Use Element	1
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	2
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	3

LAND USE PLAN

Land Use Balance	4
Special Planning Areas	15
Development Capacity	19

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Balance of Land Uses	21
Land Use Compatibility	21
Special Planning Areas	22
Cooperative Planning Efforts	24
Annexation	24

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

LU-1	Land Use Classification System	6
LU-2	General Plan and Zoning Consistency	13
LU-3	General Plan Land Use in the Los Altos Planning Area	14
LU-4	Land Use Potential and Population Estimates	20



LIST OF FIGURES

LU-1	Land Use Policy Map	5
LU-2	Floor Area Ratio Illustrated	7
LU-3	Specific Plan Areas	12
LU-4	Special Planning Areas	16

LAND USE ELEMENT



LAND USE ELEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Land Use Element	1
Scope and Content of the Land Use Element	1
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	2
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	3

LAND USE PLAN

Land Use Balance	4
Special Planning Areas	15
Development Capacity	19

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Balance of Land Uses	21
Land Use Compatibility	21
Special Planning Areas	22
Cooperative Planning Efforts	24
Annexation	24

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

LU-1	Land Use Classification System	6
LU-2	General Plan and Zoning Consistency	13
LU-3	General Plan Land Use in the Los Altos Planning Area	14
LU-4	Land Use Potential and Population Estimates	20



LIST OF FIGURES

LU-1	Land Use Policy Map	5
LU-2	Floor Area Ratio Illustrated	7
LU-3	Specific Plan Areas	12
LU-4	Special Planning Areas	16

LAND USE ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Element is a guide to land use planning within the City of Los Altos and affects many of the issues addressed in all other General Plan elements. This Element serves as the central framework for the entire General Plan and functions as a guide to planners, the general public, and decision makers as to the desired pattern of development for Los Altos.

PURPOSE OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to describe existing and future land use activity, which has been designed to achieve the City's long-range goals for physical development. The Land Use Element identifies the distribution, location, and intensity of residential, commercial, public/institutional, and open space land uses. Text, maps, and diagrams herein outline the future land uses within the City and how these uses are integrated with the other General Plan elements and policies. This Element also addresses the relationship between development and environmental quality, potential hazards, and social and economic objectives.

The current Element and its policies connect with previous planning for the community to create a future in which the traditional character of the City is preserved and enhanced by new development. Goals and policies contained in this Element establish the constitutional framework for future land use planning and decision-making in Los Altos.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Element complies with the requirements mandated in California Government Code Section 65302(a). The Element is comprised of four sections: 1) Introduction; 2) the Land Use Plan; 3) Issues, Goals, and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs Appendix.

The Land Use Plan establishes a logical, organized land use pattern with standards for future development. The Land Use Policy Map graphically identifies the planned uses within Los Altos. Land use designations are described in the Plan section, including the type and density of allowed uses, along with a statistical summary of the future land use composition. The Plan section also identifies special planning areas in the City with unique characteristics and/or opportunities.

In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major land use issues are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of community desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for reviewing development proposals, planning facilities to accommodate anticipated growth, and accomplishing community development strategies.

The Implementation Programs Appendix identifies specific implementation programs for the Land Use Element.



RELATED LAWS, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

There are a number of related laws, plans and programs that are considered in the formulation, adoption and implementation of local land use policy. Related laws, plans and programs are both local and regional in nature. Regional planning agencies recognize that planning issues extend beyond the boundaries of individual cities. The form and distribution of development in Los Altos are affected by both local and regional plans. Relevant plans are summarized below.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in response to a public mandate for a thorough environmental analysis of projects that might adversely affect the environment. The provisions of the law, review procedures and any subsequent analysis are described in the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines as amended in 1998. Land use impacts are recognized as environmental impacts under CEQA.

Association of Bay Area Governments

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is the comprehensive regional planning agency for the 100 cities and nine counties of the San Francisco Bay Area. ABAG works to establish solutions to land use, housing, environmental quality, economic development, recreation, and health and safety issues affecting the region. ABAG has conducted numerous studies and adopted goals and policies relative to land use in the region including Bay Area Futures, Silicon Valley Projections, Regional Housing Needs Assessment, Adopted Platform on Growth Management, Land Use Policy Framework, and Subregional Land Use Goals and Policies. ABAG is the source of most of the population, employment, and housing projections used in the Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Elements.

Los Altos Zoning Ordinance

As the primary implementation tool for the General Plan Land Use Element, the Zoning Ordinance establishes specific regulations for the use and development of land within the designated zoning districts of the City.

Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan

The Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan was adopted in 1999 for the 26-acre commercial area southeast of El Camino Real and San Antonio Road. The Specific Plan is intended to revitalize the aesthetics and economics of this area at the City's northern gateway.

Loyola Corners Specific Plan

The Loyola Corners Specific Plan was adopted in 1990 for the 17-acre commercial area near the intersection along Foothill Expressway at Miramonte Avenue. The primary goal of the Specific Plan is to create an attractive and functional commercial area to ensure the long-term viability of the area.

Downtown Urban Design Plan

In 1992, the City adopted the Downtown Urban Design Plan to reinforce the identity of Downtown as a retail center, to improve the visual quality of the area, and to create an attractive pedestrian environment.

Single-Family Residential Design Guidelines

The City adopted Design Guidelines for single-family residential development in 1991 to guide the homeowner, architect, developer and builder in the planning and execution of successful single-family residential design. The primary purpose is to maintain the physical attributes of existing residential neighborhoods in Los Altos.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

According to state planning law, the Land Use Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. Each element is distinct and all the elements together comprise the General Plan. All elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree, and certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are the primary subjects of other elements. The integration of overlapping issues throughout the General Plan elements provides a strong basis for implementation of plans and programs, and achievement of community goals.

More so than any other element, the Land Use Element relates directly to all other elements of the General Plan. This Element establishes the planned land use pattern for Los Altos based on historic development and the community's vision for the future. Land use planning takes into consideration housing needs identified in the Housing Element, natural and manmade hazards and development constraints identified in the Natural Environment & Hazards Element, and the open space and conservation policies outlined in the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element. Alternatively, the other General Plan elements ensure that infrastructure, utilities, and public facilities are available to accommodate planned land uses, and that the unique qualities of Los Altos are safeguarded and enhanced. Finally, a circulation plan is established in the Circulation Element to accommodate increased traffic from planned development in accordance with the Land Use Element.





LAND USE PLAN

Land use decisions in Los Altos are shaped by the community's desire to preserve and protect its unique character and existing land use patterns. The nature and character of existing development, the desire for greater economic development, and planned infrastructure capacity all has an influence on the development of land use policy and planning for future land use.

The Land Use Plan provides background information and describes the approach that will be used to build upon the community's sound planning base. The subsequent Issues, Goals, and Policies Section summarizes key issues and provides the basis for the Plan. The City's land use approach is to maintain a favorable balance of land uses, ensure land use compatibility, and direct growth and redevelopment in a manner that is economically viable and in keeping with the existing character of the community.

LAND USE BALANCE

The variety of land uses within Los Altos affects the important balance between the generation of public revenues and the provision of public facilities and services. Achieving and maintaining a balance of land uses can ensure fiscal stability and also create a desirable community in which people can reside, work, shop, and recreate.

Los Altos is a developed community with little opportunity for additional growth or major land use changes. Future growth will occur with the development of the few remaining vacant parcels and the redevelopment of currently developed parcels. The Land Use Plan identifies the land use composition throughout the City to achieve the desired balance between public revenues and services.

Land Use Classification System

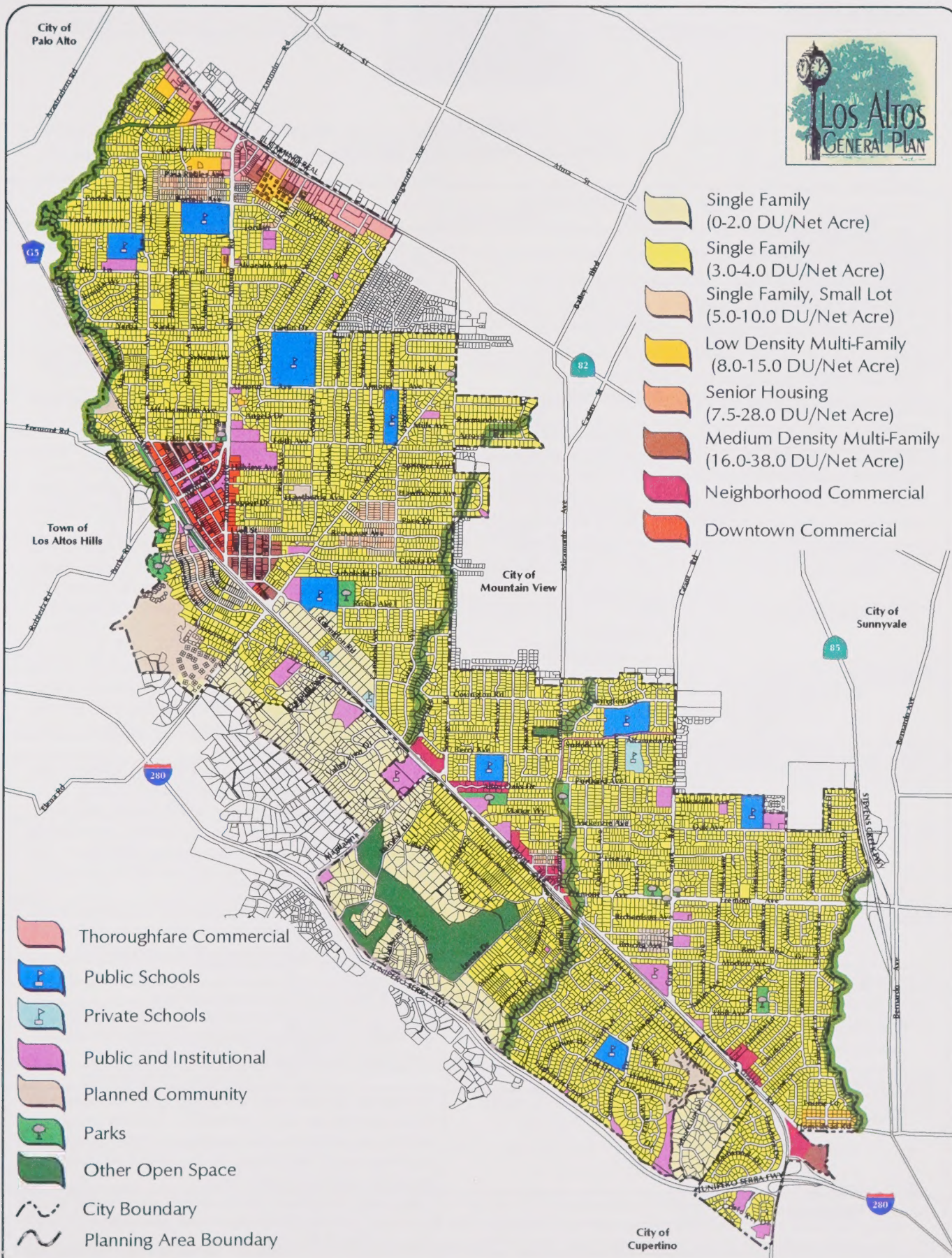
The Land Use Policy Map (LU-1) illustrates the various types and distribution of land uses planned for Los Altos. The land use classification system includes 15 General Plan land use designations, which are listed in Table LU-1. These land use designations serve to provide a rational and ordered approach to land use development and maintenance of public uses and open space by identifying the types and nature of development allowed in particular locations throughout the planning area.

The land use classification system in Los Altos includes five general land use categories: Residential, Commercial, Public and Quasi-Public Facilities, Open Space, and Planned Community. Descriptions of each general land use category and corresponding land use designations are provided in the subsequent Land Use Designations section of the Plan.

Land Use Density and Intensity

This Element uses certain terminology to describe the 15 land use designations. The term *density* is used for residential uses and refers to the population and development capacity of residential land. Density is described in terms of dwelling units per net acre of land (du/acre).

The term *intensity* refers to the extent of development on a parcel of land or lot (i.e., the total building floor area square footage, building height, the floor area ratio, and/or the percent of lot coverage). Intensity is often used to describe non-residential development levels; but in a broader sense, intensity is also used to describe overall levels of both residential and non-residential development types. In this Plan, building floor area square footage and floor area ratio are used as measures of non-residential development intensity.



- Thoroughfare Commercial
- Public Schools
- Private Schools
- Public and Institutional
- Planned Community
- Parks
- Other Open Space
- City Boundary
- Planning Area Boundary

Source: City of Los Altos GIS.

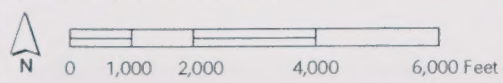


Figure LU-1
Land Use Policy Map



**Table LU-1
Land Use Classification System**

Land Use	DUs or FAR/Net Acre		Summary Description of Land Use Designation
	Maximum	Anticipated	
Residential Land Uses			
Single Family Large Lot	2.0	1.8	Detached single-family homes on large lots.
Single Family Med. Lot	4.0	3.5	Detached single-family homes.
Single Family Small Lot	10.0	5.6	Detached single-family homes on smaller lots.
Low Density Multi-Family	15.0	11.0–15.0 ⁽¹⁾	Detached and attached single-family homes, condominiums, duplexes, and apartments.
Senior Housing	28.0	21.0–28.0 ⁽¹⁾	Detached and attached single-family homes, condominiums, duplexes, and apartments for seniors.
Medium density Multi-Family	38.0	28.0–38.0 ⁽¹⁾	Detached and attached single-family homes, condominiums, and apartments.
Commercial Land Uses			
Neighborhood Commercial			Retail uses serving the needs of nearby neighborhoods. Specified areas may also include general business, medical, or professional office uses. Residential development is allowed by right at Foothill Plaza.
<i>Foothill Plaza</i>	1.5:1 (2.0:1 w/ residential) ⁽²⁾	0.35:1	
<i>All other locations</i>	0.5:1	0.35:1	
Downtown Commercial			General retail uses and service, commercial recreational, cultural, and office uses that serve local residents. Higher density residential uses that enhance the village character of the Downtown are also allowed by right in the Core and Periphery areas. Such uses may be allowed elsewhere, subject to Use Permit approval.
<i>Downtown Core</i>	1.0:1 (2.0:1 w/ residential) ⁽²⁾	1.0:1	
<i>Downtown Periphery</i>	1.0:1 (2.0:1 w/ residential) ⁽²⁾	0.8:1	
Thoroughfare Commercial			Retail, service, and small office uses that typically rely on vehicle traffic and serve the city and/or regional market. Permits mixed use development and affordable residential opportunities along El Camino Real Corridor.
<i>El Camino Real Corridor</i>	0.5:1 office (1.5:1 w/ mixed use) ⁽²⁾	0.8:1	
Public/Quasi-Public Facilities Land Uses			
Public School Land	0.6:1	0.3:1	Land owned by public school districts and used for education, recreation, administration, or other non-commercial, non-residential, or non-industrial purposes.
Private School Land	1.0:1	0.3:1	Land owned by private or parochial schools and used for education, recreation, administration, or other non-commercial, non-commercial, non-residential, or non-industrial purposes.
Public and Institutional	0.6:1	0.35:1	Governmental, institutional, academic, group residence, church, community service uses, easements, rights-of-way, facilities of public and private utilities, and parking.
Open Space Land Uses			
Parks	0.4:1	0.1:1	Publicly owned and dedicated parkland.
Other Open Space	0.6:1	NA	Open space for the preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and protection of health and public safety.
Planned Community Uses			
Planned Community	varies	varies	Various single-family and senior residential densities and housing types, as well as community facilities, private schools, recreational areas, religious facilities, educational or philanthropic institutions, public utilities and services, hospitals, and open space areas.
(1) The average density for multi-family categories is 75% to 100% of the maximum density since projects are required to construct between 75% and 100% of the maximum density unless the project will negatively impact the community.			
(2) See qualifications and special provisions in the Special Planning Areas section of the Land Use Plan.			

Floor area ratio (FAR) expresses the intensity of use on a lot. The FAR represents the ratio between the total gross floor area of all buildings on a lot and the total land area of that lot. For example, a 20,000 square foot building on a 40,000 square foot lot yields a FAR of 0.50:1. A 0.50:1 FAR describes a single-story building that covers half of the lot, or a two-story building covering approximately one-quarter of the lot. Figure LU-2 depicts the calculation of FAR.

State General Plan law requires that the Land Use Element specify the maximum densities and intensities permitted within the Land Use Plan. The land use designations shown on the Land Use Policy Map are described in detail in this Element. Table LU-1 lists each of the land use designations shown on the Land Use

Policy Map and provides a corresponding indication of maximum density or intensity of development. Maximum allowable development on individual parcels of land is governed by these measures of density or intensity. The table also includes an anticipated overall level of development within each land use designation within the planning area. Measures of anticipated future development intensity and density are based upon estimates of existing levels of development and are, therefore, less than the absolute maximum allowed for an individual parcel of land. For various reasons, many parcels in the community have not been developed to their maximum density or intensity and, in the future, maximum development as described in this Element can be expected to occur only on a limited number of parcels.

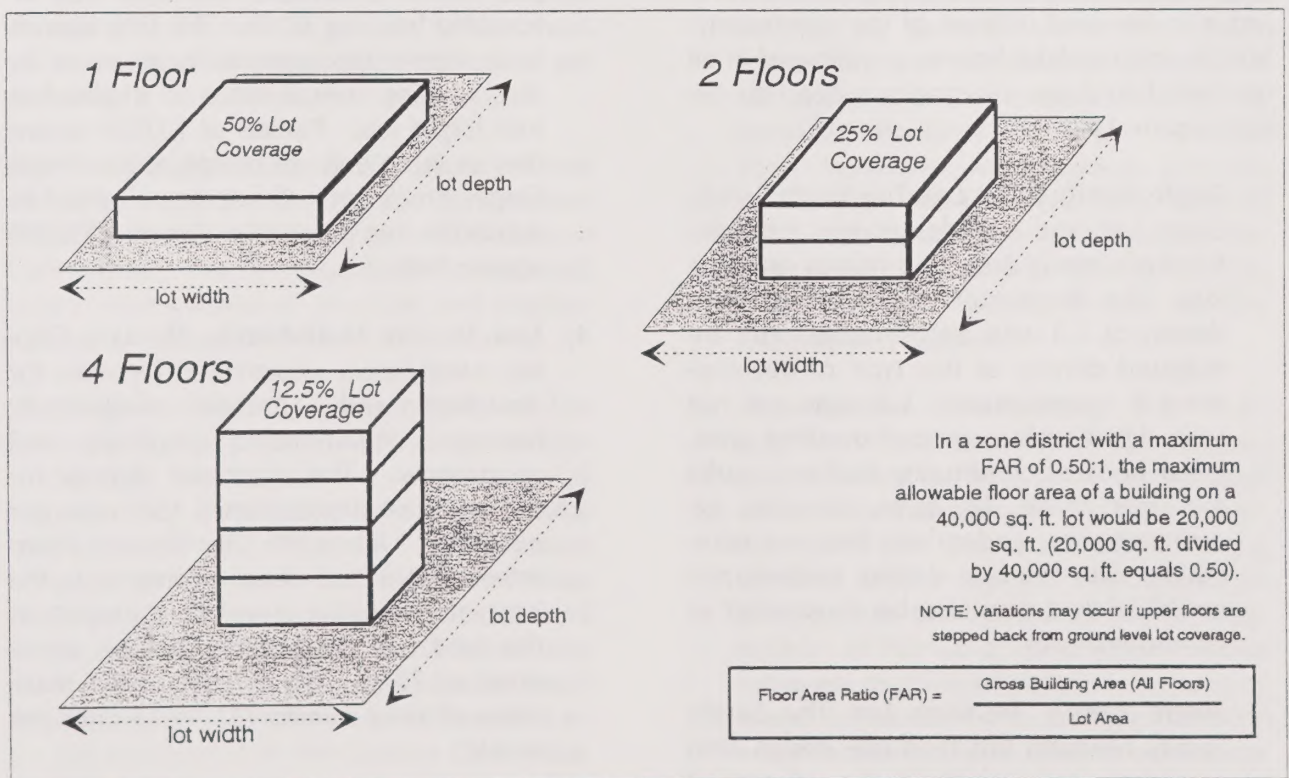


Figure LU-2
Floor Area Ratio



Land Use Designations

All land in the Los Altos planning area is assigned to one of the 15 land use designations described below:

Residential Land Use Designations: There are six residential land use designations that allow for a variety of housing types. The maximum density listed for each residential land use designation may be exceeded with General Plan Housing Element policy in accordance with the density bonus provisions of Section 65915 of the California Government Code. Development projects within the Low and Medium Density Multi-Family and Senior Housing designations shall be developed at 75 to 100 percent of the maximum density permitted by the associated zoning unless the City Council determines that a less dense project is in the best interest of the community. Mobile and modular homes are allowed in all residential land use categories, subject to design approval.

- 1) **Single Family Large Lot.** The Single Family Large Lot land use designation provides for single-family detached homes on large lots. The designation allows a maximum density of 2.0 units per net acre. The anticipated density of this type of development is approximately 1.8 units per net acre. Uses such as second dwelling units, guest houses, community facilities, parks and open space, day cares, churches, agricultural uses, and others that are compatible with the low density single-family neighborhood may also be considered as conditional uses.
- 2) **Single Family Medium Lot.** The Single Family Medium Lot land use designation provides for single-family detached homes. The designation allows a maximum density of 4.0 units per net acre. The anticipated density of future Single Family Medium Lot development is approximately 3.5 units per net acre. Uses

such as second dwelling units, guest houses, community facilities, parks and open space, day cares, churches, agricultural uses, and others that are compatible with the low density single-family neighborhood may also be considered as conditional uses.

- 3) **Single Family Small Lot.** The Single Family Small Lot land use designation provides for single-family detached homes on smaller lots. The designation allows a maximum density of 10.0 units per net acre where already subdivided. Future small lot development is anticipated at a density of approximately 5.6 units per net acre. The City recognizes that areas that were developed with higher density single-family homes comprise an important part of the community character and affordable housing stock. The City intends to conserve this community resource by discouraging consolidation of smaller lots into larger lots. Parcels of 10,000 square feet or more that are designated as Single Family Small Lot will not be permitted to subdivide into parcels smaller than 10,000 square feet.
- 4) **Low Density Multi-Family.** The Low Density Multi-Family designation provides for detached and attached single-family homes, condominiums, duplexes, and apartments. The maximum density for this land use designation is 15.0 units per net acre. Unless the City Council determines that a less dense project is in the best interest of the community, projects in this land use designation shall be developed at 75 to 100 percent of the maximum allowed density (11 to 15 units per acre).
- 5) **Senior Housing.** The Senior Housing designation is designed to meet a variety of the City's senior housing needs. To serve these needs, this designation provides for detached and attached single-family

homes, condominiums, duplexes, and apartments. The maximum density for this land use designation is 28.0 units per net acre. Projects with this designation shall be developed at 75 to 100 percent of the maximum allowed density (21 to 28 units per acre), unless the City Council determines that a less dense project is in the best interest of the community.

- 6) **Medium Density Multi-Family.** The Medium Density Multi-Family residential designation provides for detached and attached single-family homes, condominiums, and apartments. The maximum density for this land use designation is 38.0 units per net acre. Unless the City Council determines that a less dense project is in the best interest of the community, projects with this designation shall be developed at 75 to 100 percent of the maximum allowed density (28 to 38 units per acre).

Commercial Land Use Designations: There are three commercial land use designations (Neighborhood Commercial, Downtown Commercial, and Thoroughfare Commercial) to promote a range of revenue- and employment-generating businesses in the City.

- 7) **Neighborhood Commercial.** The Neighborhood Commercial land use designation provides for a variety of retail uses that serve the needs of nearby neighborhoods, but do not supplant commercial uses in Downtown Los Altos. In addition to retail uses, areas designated for Neighborhood Commercial may also include space for general business, medical, or professional offices in specified areas as allowed by the Zoning Ordinance. Potential traffic impacts to surrounding neighborhoods and the Foothill Expressway will be considered when determining the allowable development intensity for each center. The Special Planning Areas section of the Land Use Element estab-

lishes the potential to increase the allowed density and intensity for the inclusion of residential development. Otherwise, the maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.5:1. The anticipated intensity of development in this designation is a floor area ratio of 0.35:1.

- 8) **Downtown Commercial.** The Downtown Commercial land use designation provides for a wider range of general retail than the Neighborhood Commercial and also provides for service, commercial recreational, cultural, and office uses that serve local residents. Higher density residential uses are also allowed to enhance the village character of the area. As identified in the Special Planning Areas section of the Land Use Plan, the City will consider increasing the maximum density and intensity of development in the Downtown Core and Periphery to enhance retail activities and encourage housing, especially affordable housing. Without these incentives, the maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.0:1 and the anticipated intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.0:1 for the Downtown Core and 0.8:1 for the Downtown Periphery.
- 9) **Thoroughfare Commercial.** The Thoroughfare Commercial land use designation provides for both retail, service, and office uses that typically rely on automobile traffic and attract customers from a citywide and/or regional trade area. As identified in the Special Planning Areas section of this Land Use Plan, floor area ratios are established based on the type of use(s) proposed. The City will consider other incentives in an effort to encourage mixed-use development and affordable housing. The anticipated intensity of development in this land use designation is a floor area ratio of 0.8:1.



Public/Quasi Public Land Use Designations:

There are five public and quasi-public land use designations to accommodate land owned and/or operated by or for the community of Los Altos for the public good. Uses allowed in these land use designations are also permitted uses in several other general plan land use designations and corresponding zoning districts.

10) **Public School Land.** The Public School Land designation applies to land owned by public school districts and used or proposed for education, recreation, administration, or other non-commercial, non-residential, or non-industrial purposes. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.6:1. The anticipated development intensity for this land use designation is a floor area ratio of 0.3:1.

11) **Private School Land.** The Private School Land designation applies to land owned by private or parochial schools and used or proposed for education, recreation, administration, or other non-commercial, non-residential, or non-industrial purposes. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 1.0:1. The anticipated development intensity for this land use designation is a floor area ratio of 0.3:1.

12) **Public and Institutional.** The Public and Institutional land use designation provides for governmental, institutional, academic, group residence, church, community service uses and lands, utilities, easements, rights-of-way, and City-owned parking facilities. Public and Institutional facilities are intended to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Where applicable, the maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.6:1. The anticipated development intensity for this land use designation is a floor area ratio of 0.35:1.

Open Space Designations: There are two land use designations (Parks and Other Open Space), which provide for open space and recreational uses.

13) **Parks.** The Parks designation provides for publicly owned and dedicated parkland. Activities that may be developed include areas for active sports play, large multipurpose fields for community events and informal recreation, tot lots, picnic areas, multipurpose sports fields and courts, concessions, community event space, outdoor amphitheaters, maintenance/support facilities and caretaker facilities. The maximum intensity of development is a floor area ratio of 0.4:1. The anticipated development intensity for this land use designation is a floor area ratio of 0.1:1.

14) **Other Open Space.** The Other Open Space designation provides open space for the preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and protection of health and public safety. Areas designated for Other Open Space include: waterways, open space easements, private and public open space, as well as golf courses and other private recreational uses.

Planned Community Land Use Designation:

The Planned Community designation allows for detailed analysis and flexibility of land uses for larger areas, or areas with special needs.

15) **Planned Community.** The Planned Community designation provides for the long-term development of large areas of land under single or common ownership or control. The Planned Community designation ensures compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods; protects the public health, safety, and welfare; provides for the long-term development of large properties; protects and preserves open space as a limited and valuable re-

source; and permits reasonable use of land. The Planned Community designation also preserves and protects land for recreation, scenic value, conservation or natural resources, agriculture, senior housing, residential, and low intensity public/quasi public facilities. Allowable uses include a variety of residential single family and senior housing types, as well as community facilities, private schools, recreational areas, religious facilities, educational or philanthropic institutions, public utilities and services, hospitals, and open space areas. The maximum intensity of development will be determined based on the zoning of the area prior to rezoning to Planned Community. Senior housing projects may be approved up to a maximum density of 50 units per acre.

Specific Plans

Specific Plans are master plans for particular areas in the City. Specific Plans are not land use designations like the others discussed above; rather, the underlying General Plan designation identifies the allowable land uses and the Specific Plan addresses implementation for the development of the target area. The scope of the Specific Plan requires a detailed level of examination and planning not practical at a General Plan level. There are two areas within the City subject to specific plans as follows (See Figure LU-3):

- ❖ ***Loyola Corners Specific Plan.*** The Loyola Corners Specific Plan was adopted in 1990 creating use, development, and design regulations for the 17-acre commercial area along Foothill Expressway.
- ❖ ***Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan.*** Adopted in 1998, the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan establishes use provisions and development and design standards for the 26-acre commercial area southeast of El Camino Real and San Antonio Road.

- ❖ ***Downtown Urban Design Plan.*** In 1992, the City adopted the Downtown Urban Design Plan to reinforce the identity of Downtown as a retail center, to improve the visual quality of the area, and to create an attractive pedestrian environment.

Zoning Consistency

The Zoning Ordinance serves as the primary tool for implementing the City's land use policy. State planning law requires the Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the General Plan. Each General Plan land use category must have one or more corresponding zone district, and the development standards and land use regulations contained in the Zoning Ordinance must reflect the policy statements in the Land Use Element. While the General Plan may be somewhat broad in its discussion of permitted land uses and development intensities, zoning provisions must identify specific regulations so that property owners and developers can determine how particular properties can be used and developed. Table LU-2 identifies the relationships between land use categories and zone districts.







**Table LU-2
General Plan and Zoning Consistency**

General Plan Land Use Category	Corresponding Zoning Districts
Single Family Large Lot	R1-40, R1-20, R1-H, R1-10, PC, PCF, PCF/R1-10, PUD
Single Family Medium Lot	R1-H, R1-10, PC, PCF, PCF/R1-10, PUD
Single Family Small Lot	R1-10, LC/SPZ, PC, PCF/R1-10, PUD
Low Density Multi-Family	R3-4.5, R3-5, R3-3, PC, PUD
Senior Housing	R3-4.5, R3-5, R3-3, R3-1.8, PC, PUD
Medium Density Multi-Family	R3-1.8, R3-1, OAD/R3-1, PC, PUD
Neighborhood Commercial	OA-1, CN, LC/SPZ,
Downtown Commercial	R3-1.8, R3-1, OAD, OA, OA-4.5, OAD/R3-1, CD, CS, CRS, CRS/OAD, PUD
Thoroughfare Commercial	OA-1, CN, CT, PUD
Public School Land	R1-40, R1-20, R1-H, R1-10, PC, PCF, PCF-R1-10, PUD
Private School Land	R1-40, R1-20, R1-H, R1-10, PC, PCF, PCF-R1-10, PUD
Public and Institutional	R1-40, R1-20, R1-H, R1-10, PC, PCF, PCF-R1-10, PUD ⁽¹⁾
Parks	R1-40, R1-20, R1-H, R1-10, PC, PCF, PCF/R1-10, PUD
Other Open Space	R1-40, R1-20, R1-H, R1-10, R3-4.5, R3-5, R3-3, R3-1, PC, PCF, PCF/R1-10, PUD
Planned Community	R1-40, R1-20, R1-H, R1-10, PC, PCF/R1-10, PUD
(1) In addition to the listed zoning districts, utilities are permitted in all multi-family residential and commercial zoning districts. City-owned parking facilities are only permitted in non-residential zoning districts.	



Land Use Composition

Figure LU-1 is the Land Use Policy Map for the City, which illustrates planned land uses within the planning area. The map serves as a guide for future land use decisions made by City staff, the Planning Commission, and City Council.

Because Los Altos is an established and largely developed community, the majority of planned land uses shown in Figure LU-1 correspond to existing development. A desirable balance of land uses currently exists, and will be maintained in the future under the proposed land use plan. Table LU-3 lists acreage figures for each land use category in accordance with the Land Use Policy Map.

Table LU-3
General Plan Land Use in the Los Altos Planning Area

Land Use	Net Acres in Planning Area	Percentage of Land in Planning Area
Single-Family Large Lot	429	11%
Single-Family Medium Lot	2,598	67%
Single-Family Small Lot	83	2%
Low Density Multi-Family	34	1%
Medium Density Multi-Family	45	1%
Neighborhood Commercial	37	1%
Downtown Commercial	42	1%
Thoroughfare Commercial	59	2%
Public School Land	120	3%
Private School Land	34	1%
Public and Institutional	113	3%
Utilities		
Parking		
Parks	32	1%
Other Open Space	127	3%
Planned Community	93	3%
Total	3,846	100%



Annexations

Since 1974, Los Altos has annexed approximately 382 acres of residential land. Lands possibly subject to future annexation are also in residential use or designated for open space. Therefore, any future annexation will further reinforce the City's residential orientation.

Figure LU-1 shows current City boundaries and areas subject to annexation within the City's planning area. The Sphere of Influence, as defined by the Santa Clara County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) and planning area boundaries are one in the same. Annexation requires an affirmative, majority vote of the residents of an area requesting to annex to a city, a majority vote of the City Council, and approval of a majority of the LAFCO Board.

Prior to the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, residential property generated sufficient taxes to cover City expenses associated with those properties. This has not necessarily been the case since Proposition 13. In order to make an informed decision on the desirability of annexing an area, the City evaluates the costs and benefits of a proposed annexation. The City may require the petitioners to conduct a fiscal impact analysis to assist in this evaluation.

Pre-Zoning

Land outside the City limits, but within the Los Altos planning area, is pre-zoned with the approval of Santa Clara County. Pre-zoning shows a city's intended zoning for an area in the event the area annexes to the city, and becomes the city's zoning for the area upon annexation. Pre-zoning also serves as a guide to the County in its land use decision-making.

Pre-zoning is subject to the same requirements applicable to zoning in a city, including the requirement for consistency with the general plan. Zone changes can be granted in compliance with prescribed procedures. Los Altos, with the approval of Santa Clara County, has pre-zoned land with annexation potential for varying densities of single-family use.

SPECIAL PLANNING AREAS

Los Altos' land use patterns are well established. However, shifts in retailing and office trends, combined with a strong need for affordable housing in the Bay Area affect how property is used and reused, developed and redeveloped over time. The Land Use Policy Map responds both to the City's highly developed character and anticipated long-term land use changes that will further City objectives. Land use patterns generally will remain unchanged, particularly with regard to the City's residential neighborhoods. However, public and private investment will be applied to Special Planning Areas to achieve land use changes and associated economic development and housing goals. Figure LU-4 identifies the following Special Planning Areas:

- ❖ Downtown
- ❖ El Camino Real Corridor
- ❖ Foothill Plaza
- ❖ El Retiro

Within each of these Special Planning Areas, the City is introducing the concepts and opportunities for increasing land use density and intensity to better achieve specific objectives for these areas. Some provisions will supplement the requirements associated with each base land use designation, and others will be analyzed further for implementation using the City's Zoning Ordinance.

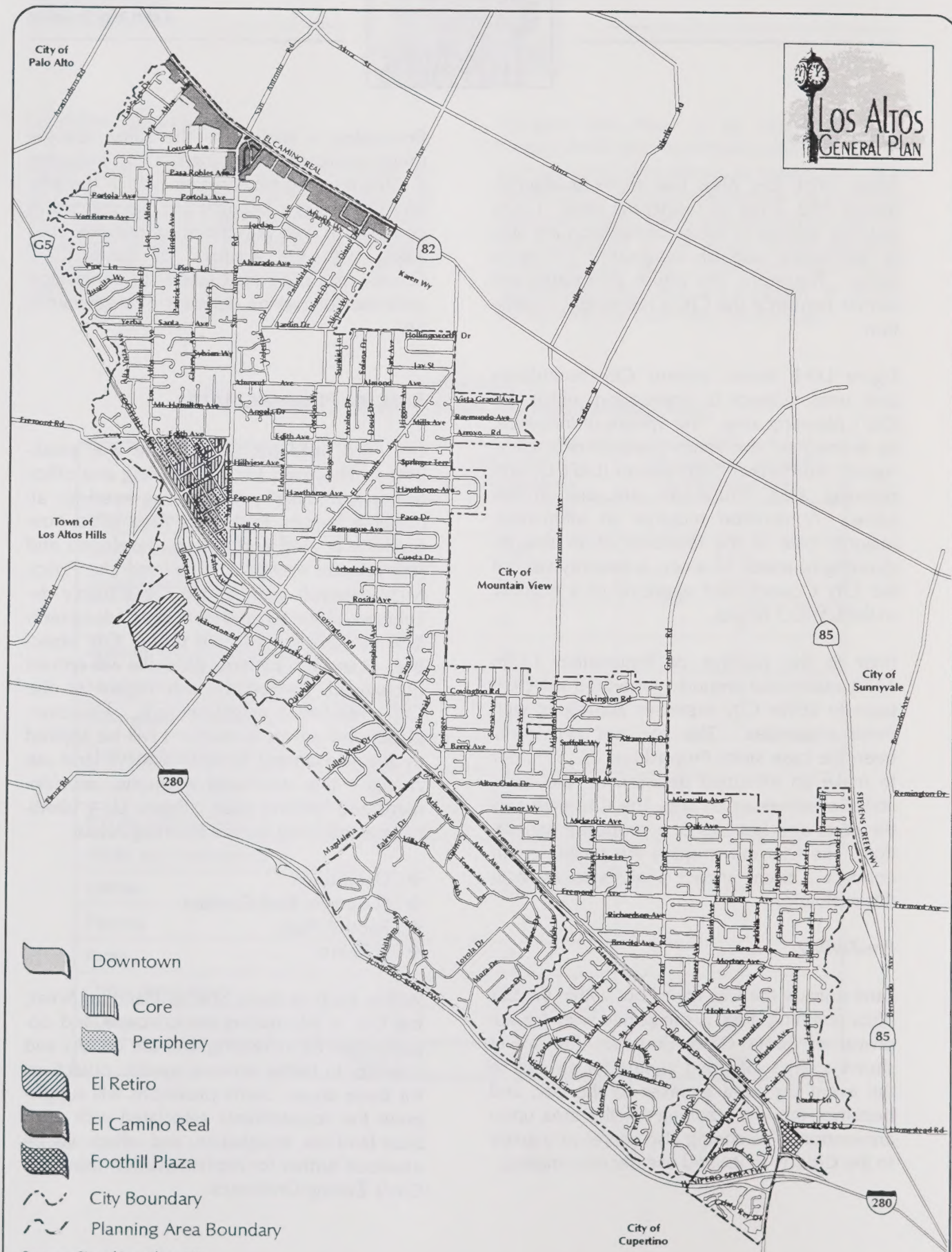


Figure LU-4
Special Planning Areas



Downtown

Downtown Los Altos represents the heart of the City. It includes all properties located between Edith Avenue, Foothill Expressway, and San Antonio Road. One- and two-story pedestrian-oriented retail development, some professional offices and service uses, and two-lane roadways with both diagonal and parallel on-street parking characterize the Downtown Core area.

Development consists of one, two and three story buildings on small lots. Although some on-street parking is available, most parking in the area is contained within City-owned and operated parking plazas, which are crowded mid-week days. The Downtown area offers opportunities for broader use, coordinated development, and a mix of commercial and residential uses that have the potential to create a more vibrant and economically productive district.

For planning purposes, the area has been split into two planning districts: Downtown Core and Downtown Periphery. The Downtown Core area includes all properties within the Downtown area located along State Street and Main Street, northeast of Foothill Expressway, and west of San Antonio Road. The Downtown Periphery area includes all properties north and south of the Downtown Core area, but still within the Downtown triangle.

Intensifying uses within the Downtown Core offers potential to enhance retail activities, increase evening activities with a hotel and theater, and supplement the City's affordable housing stock. To achieve these objectives, the City will consider amending the Downtown zoning regulations to provide development incentives for the inclusion of a residential component that includes affordable housing as follows:

- ❖ Increase the allowable FAR up to a maximum 2.0:1; and/or
- ❖ Increase the height limit to a maximum of three stories.

Otherwise, the maximum FAR for the Downtown is 1.0:1 and the maximum building height is 30 feet and two stories.

Residential development is allowed on second floors of structures within both the Core and Periphery. A significant number of future residential units developed in the area shall be affordable to very low- and low-income households. Some market rate units are permitted to provide an incentive for residential development. In lieu of requiring that additional parking be provided, the City will consider implementing a parking fee for use of City-owned parking plazas by Downtown Core residents living in below market rate units.

El Camino Real Corridor

El Camino Real forms the northern boundary of the City, supporting a mix of low- to medium-scale offices, retail stores, personal services, restaurants, and lodging. The corridor borders the adjacent Cities of Mountain View and Palo Alto, which have encouraged intensive retail, office, lodging, and residential development on their sections of the roadway.

The lower-intensity nature of uses found on the Los Altos side of the road works well to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods, to minimize additional traffic flow from and onto El Camino Real, and provide a suitable location for small office-based businesses. However, the corridor as currently configured does not provide much in the way of affordable housing, and is gradually becoming more of an office district and less of a retail area. Moderate intensification of uses fronting the corridor offers an opportunity to create additional affordable housing,



sustain diversity within the City's commercial centers, and control the amount of office space developed on the Corridor to ensure that sales tax revenue is maximized.

To achieve these objectives, the City will consider amending the Thoroughfare Commercial zoning regulations for the El Camino Real corridor. Allowable uses may include any combination of residential, office, retail, lodging, and personal services. The ground floor of all new mixed-use development may be limited to retail, hotel, motel, or restaurant uses only.

In terms of floor area ratio, projects that are entirely office use could be limited to a maximum FAR of 0.5:1 to discourage this type of development exclusively. All other uses could be allowed a maximum FAR of 1.5:1. However, the amount of floor area that exceeds a 0.5:1 ratio should be for retail, housing, or lodging use. The height limit for this area is 30 feet and two stories. However, projects with residential components could be allowed up to a maximum height of three stories as a further incentive to encourage mixed-use projects and obtain affordable housing.

Foothill Plaza

In the southeast corner of the City, a potentially underdeveloped commercial center offers new opportunities for mixed-use development. Foothill Plaza is located at the northeast corner of the junction of Foothill Expressway and I-280. A portion of the Plaza is located within the adjacent City of Cupertino. Within this area, the City will consider encouraging development of affordable housing opportunities in conjunction with current retail and service uses.

Residential development may be allowed and residential projects could include affordable (below market rate) housing with either ten percent of the total housing units affordable to very low-income households, 20 percent of

the total units affordable to very low- and low-income households, or 50 percent of the total units affordable to very low-, low-, and moderate income households.

In order to achieve affordable housing objectives, the City will consider amending the Neighborhood Commercial zoning regulations for this area for development of affordable housing as follows:

- ❖ Increase the allowable FAR up to a maximum 2.0:1; and/or
- ❖ Increase the height limit to a maximum of three stories.

Otherwise, the maximum FAR for the Foothill Plaza is 1.5:1 and the maximum building height is 30 feet and two stories.

El Retiro

The El Retiro site, which consists of approximately 51.5 acres, is located west of University Avenue and north of O'Keefe Lane. The site is recognized as an important property because of its sensitive environment, large open spaces, and use over the years as a private retreat. The City conducted a planning study to determine and ensure proper use of the site into the future.

In 1984, the City amended the land use designation of the property to Planned Community and adopted special goals and policies regarding phasing and development of the site. The City also adopted a Master Plan for El Retiro, which established a baseline number of units for each residential area and identified areas of public and private open space and areas not suitable for development. A portion of the property has been dedicated to the City as an open space conservation area. Based on the existing and surrounding land use, the allowed development on the site was established at 40 units, with a potential density bonus of up to ten additional units, in ex-

change for dedicated public open space on the site.

DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Table LU-4 provides a statistical description of the 15 General Plan land use designations within the City and a corresponding indication of maximum density or intensity of development. The maximum allowable development on individual parcels is governed by these measures of density or intensity.

For various reasons, many parcels in the community have not been developed to their maximum density or intensity. In the future, development is anticipated to occur in a similar manner with only a limited number of parcels being developed at the maximum density or intensity. Thus, for much of the community, the projected (anticipated) future development intensity and density listed in Table LU-4 is based upon the intensity/density of existing development.

Anticipated density and intensity is for planning purposes only and exceeding them on individual parcels of land does not require a General Plan Amendment. Development can occur up to the maximum allowed density or intensity with required site and/or design review. Additionally, a density bonus of at least 25 percent is required by state law to be offered for certain projects affordable to low or very low income households.

Table LU-4 includes the planned land use and/or development intensities in the identified Special Planning Areas. Most significant are the potential changes to the El Camino Real corridor.

Population estimates are for the entire Los Altos planning area, including the City of Los Altos and small adjacent unincorporated areas in the County.



Table LU-4
Land Use Potential and Population Estimates

Land Use	Anticipated Development Density/Intensity		Net Acres	Estimated Dwelling Units	Estimated Non- Residential Square Feet (Thousands)	Estimated Population
	DU/Net Acre	FAR/Net Acre				
Residential Land Use Designations						
Single Family Large Lot	1.8	–	429	9,653	–	25,817
Single-Family Medium Lot	3.5	–	2,598			
Single-Family Small Lot	5.6	–	83			
Low Density Multi-Family	11.0 – 15.0	–	34	841	–	2,249
Senior Housing	21.0 – 28.0	–	–			
Medium Density Multi-Family	28.0 – 38.0	–	45			
Commercial Land Use Designations						
Neighborhood Commercial						
Foothill Plaza	10	0.35	6	60	91	160
All other locations	–	0.35	31	–	472	–
Downtown Commercial						
Downtown Core*	6	1.0	24	35	653	93
Downtown Periphery*	6	0.8	18	42	487	112
Thoroughfare Commercial						
El Camino Real Corridor*	6	0.8	59	234	3,056	310
Public/Quasi-Public Land Use Designations						
Public School Land		0.3	120	–	1,574	–
Private School Land		0.3	34	–	449	–
Public and Institutional		0.35	113	–	1,717	–
Open Space Land Use Designations						
Parks	–	0.1	32	–	137	–
Other Open Space	–	–	127	–	–	–
Other Land Uses						
Planned Community	–	varies	93	included above		included above
Total			3,846	10,865	8,636	28,741
Note: Estimated dwelling units for residential land use designations use 2001 DOF data. Population estimates assume 2.67 Persons per occupied housing unit (per DOF, 2001)						
* Projected dwelling units, non-residential square feet, and population for the Downtown Core, Downtown Periphery, and El Camino Real Corridor are based upon development potential of underutilized sites within each Special Planning Area.						



ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

The Land Use Element describes long-range goals for the physical development of the community, both in terms of land use type and intensity, as well as urban character and form. Five major issues are addressed by the goals, policies, and plan in the Land Use Element. These major issues are:

- 1) Balancing land uses;
- 2) Land use compatibility;
- 3) Special planning areas;
- 4) Cooperative planning efforts; and
- 5) Annexation.

Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Element.

BALANCE OF LAND USES

A balance of land uses is important to ensure fiscal stability with sufficient public revenues to pay for necessary and desired public facilities and services. The land use composition in the Los Altos planning area includes 82 percent residential, four percent commercial, seven percent public and quasi-public, four percent parks and open space, and three percent planned community. As a developed community, the focus of community efforts regarding the balance of land uses is on preserving existing uses and character while ensuring that new development and redevelopment are compatible with existing development.

Goal 1: Balance the desirability of public/quasi-public and commercial uses with their impacts upon adjoining residential land uses.

Policy 1.1: Maintain flexibility of standards and procedures to accommodate changing trends in retail, housing, and office uses.

Policy 1.2: Recognize the unique contribution of certain non-conforming uses to community identity and the historic and economic value of the Los Altos Nursery, DeMartini Orchard Market and Foodland Market, and the residential value of Holly Village.

Policy 1.3: Ensure that the integrity, residential character, and boundary of the Altos Oaks office area are maintained.

Policy 1.4: Encourage continued efforts to improve the parking, aesthetics, and neighborhood compatibility of Pilgrim Haven.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

The majority of Los Altos has been developed, forming the City's unique character with its Downtown village center and low-density residential neighborhoods. As new development and redevelopment occurs, projects are evaluated to ensure that they contribute to the unique community character and do not negatively impact existing development with increased traffic and noise. Areas of special concern include the El Camino Real corridor, the Downtown, Foothill Plaza and other business districts.

Goal 2: Plan for a compatible and harmonious arrangement of land uses by providing a mix of uses consistent with projected future social and economic conditions in Los Altos.



Policy 2.1: Continue to apply land use designations which recognize existing development patterns and expected future conditions.

Policy 2.2: Encourage a variety of residential housing opportunities by allowing residential uses with adequate parking in appropriate commercial areas, including sections of the Downtown area, Foothill Plaza and along El Camino Real.

Policy 2.3: Continue to conduct design review of residential and non-residential development applications to ensure compatibility with surrounding property and neighborhoods.

Policy 2.4: Promote the use of planned unit developments (PUDs) to achieve physical development that recognizes the unique qualities of a site and harmonizes with existing and future land uses in the vicinity.

Policy 2.5: For planned unit developments (PUDs), review, at a minimum, site plans and building elevations concurrently with tentative maps for future subdivision applications.

SPECIAL PLANNING AREAS

Because Los Altos is an established community with few undeveloped parcels, there is little opportunity for significant change. However, in terms of redeveloping existing areas, the City has identified four areas with special planning needs and/or opportunities. Three areas with potential for land use

changes include Downtown, El Camino Real corridor, and Foothill Plaza. Additionally, the El Retiro site has been master planned for future development. A brief discussion of each area, along with individual goals and policies, is provided below.

Downtown

The Downtown is the pride of the community with a small-town village atmosphere serving the commercial needs of both residents and visitors. In the Downtown Core, one- and two-story contiguous buildings create walkable storefronts with wide sidewalks and an inviting streetscape. The City has identified the opportunity to intensify the land uses in the Downtown Core. In keeping with the use regulations in the Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) Zoning District, use provisions encourage retail and service uses on the ground floor, with development incentives for the inclusion of a residential component on the second and/or third stories.

Goal 3: Allow for intensification of development within the Downtown Core in keeping with the existing character of the area.

Policy 3.1: Encourage residential development above the ground floor that includes affordable housing units.

Policy 3.2: Consider zoning code incentives to encourage mixed-use development.

Policy 3.3: Consider a parking fee for residential use of City-owned parking plazas in lieu of additional parking requirements for below market rate housing residents.

Policy 3.4: Consider amending the zoning code to allow development of three-story buildings



in the Downtown Core to encourage construction of below market rate housing units.

Policy 3.5: Continue to review development plans to ensure compliance with the Downtown Urban Design Plan.

El Camino Real

El Camino Real is a six lane arterial road with contiguous commercial development along the City's northern boundary, abutting the cities of Mountain View and Palo Alto. With several underutilized properties and properties primed for redevelopment along this major thoroughfare, there are significant opportunities for land use intensification and revitalization of the corridor without jeopardizing the small town character of the community.

Goal 4: Improve the land use mix along El Camino Real to ensure fiscal stability, encourage affordable housing, and to allow for development intensification along this corridor in a manner that is compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhoods and the local circulation system.

Policy 4.1: Discourage projects which are exclusively office use.

Policy 4.2: Encourage mixed-use projects with retail, housing, and/or lodging in addition to retail and office uses.

Policy 4.3: Encourage residential development on appropriate sites within the El Camino Real corridor.

Policy 4.4: Encourage the development of affordable housing.

Policy 4.5: Consider amending the zoning code to allow a third story

for projects that include a residential component.

Policy 4.6: Continue to review development proposals to ensure a balance between development rights and impact on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Foothill Plaza

Foothill Plaza is a potentially underdeveloped neighborhood commercial center located at the southern gateway to the City. The City encourages the development of affordable housing in conjunction with existing commercial development at this location.

Goal 5: Encourage additional housing opportunities compatible with existing retail and services uses within the Foothill Plaza development.

Policy 5.1: Consider amending the zoning code to allow increased development density and intensity for the provision of mixed use and affordable housing.

Policy 5.2: Consider amending the zoning code to allow development of three-story buildings to encourage construction of below market rate housing units.

El Retiro

A Master Plan has been adopted for development of the 51.5-acre El Retiro site. Associated policies are listed below.

Goal 6: Ensure that development of the El Retiro site complies with established guidelines for phased development in a manner that is sensitive to environmental constraints, maximizes the preservation of on-



site open space, and prevents intrusion into existing land uses surrounding the site.

Policy 6.1: Allow site development at El Retiro to occur within a framework that accommodates a range of phased development possibilities.

Policy 6.2: Minimize potential land use conflicts between existing and proposed uses in the vicinity of the El Retiro site.

Policy 6.3: Ensure compatibility between the Jesuit Retreat uses and other future land uses on the El Retiro site.

Policy 6.4: Encourage and facilitate development of senior housing on the El Retiro site as a desirable land use, if found to be appropriate upon further investigation.

COOPERATIVE PLANNING EFFORTS

The City of Los Altos is surrounded by several other incorporated communities within Santa Clara County. In an effort to maintain its unique identity among Silicon Valley communities and to minimize impacts from the more intense development of surrounding communities, Los Altos will continue to coordinate with other local and regional agencies in land use planning and development review.

Goal 7: Work with surrounding jurisdictions to encourage a cooperative approach for review of development outside the community which impacts Los Altos.

Policy 7.1: Continue to monitor and work with surrounding jurisdictions and schools districts to promote new development out-

side the community that will not negatively impact Los Altos.

ANNEXATION

Los Altos has included within its planning area three unincorporated areas west of the Foothill Expressway. Most of the land in these areas is already developed. To ensure orderly and compatible redevelopment or new development within these areas, the City needs to continue to work with Santa Clara County to coordinate review of development and redevelopment proposals to minimize potential impacts on Los Altos.

Goal 8: Promote orderly and compatible development outside the City limits but within the planning area.

Policy 8.1: Annex adjacent lands as and when appropriate and fiscally feasible.

Policy 8.2: Cooperate with Santa Clara County in their policy to require unincorporated applicants contiguous to the City to be reviewed for potential annexation before proceeding with development.

Policy 8.3: Ensure City review and oversight of development occurring in currently unincorporated portions of the planning area.

Policy 8.4: Seek to expand the City limits at Foothill Plaza to incorporate the portion of the Plaza currently in Cupertino.



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness

The Implementation Programs Appendix provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and plans for City elected officials, staff and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Programs are to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a measure, procedure, or technique that requires additional City action. This action may either occur on a City-wide basis or in specific areas within the City. The City Council, by relating the Implementation Programs to the General Plan, recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

Use of the General Plan Implementation Program

The Implementation Programs are intended for use in preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the California Government Code. Because some of the individual actions and programs described in the Implementation Programs Appendix act as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by Section 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This Implementation Programs Appendix may be updated annually with the budget process and whenever the City's



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Land Use Element. The Land Use Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Land Use Element.

BALANCE OF LAND USES

LU 1: ANNUAL REVIEW OF GP AND LAND USE POLICY MAP IMPLEMENTATION

Review implementation of the General Plan and Land Use Policy Map to identify the effect of land development and use on City revenue and costs of providing public facilities and services.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame:	Annual
Related Policies:	1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 4.4, 6.2

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

LU 2: ZONING ORDINANCE REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

Review and amend (as needed) the Zoning Ordinance to provide consistency with new state legislation and court decisions. Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments that implement the use and development of goals, policies, and plan objectives for the identified special planning areas (e.g., Downtown, El Camino Real Corridor, and Foothill Plaza).

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame:	2002/2003 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1

LU 3: ZONING ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT

Continue to enforce the Zoning Ordinance and other ordinances to achieve the desired level of regulation.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 2.1

**LU 4: SITE DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN REVIEW**

Utilize the site development and design review process and the California Environmental Quality Act in the review of proposed residential and non-residential projects to promote high quality design, to ensure compliance with applicable regulations, to ensure compatibility with surrounding property and use, and to minimize environmental impacts. Special attention shall be given to ensuring compatibility between residential and non-residential uses (e.g., land use buffering).

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 3.3, 4.6, 6.3

LU 5: PARKING NEEDS AND FINANCING

Study and periodically update information on parking needs in the Downtown Core and methods of financing. Implement the recommendations of parking studies and consider the financing opinions for parking plaza improvements.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	Assessment fees, private investment
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1

SPECIAL PLANNING AREAS**LU 6: DOWNTOWN LOS ALTOS**

Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments to increase the maximum density and intensity for residential development above the ground floor consistent with the goals, policies, and plan objectives for the Downtown Core. Ensure that new development and redevelopment is consistent with the Downtown Urban Design Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	2002/2003 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1, 3.2, 3.3

LU 7: EL CAMINO REAL CORRIDOR

Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments to encourage mixed-use development, provide for affordable housing, and for intensification of development throughout the corridor consistent with the corresponding General Plan goals, policies, and plan objectives. New development and redevelopment in this area shall be consistent with applicable General Plan policies, corresponding Zoning Code regulations, and any special plans subsequently adopted for this corridor. During design review, special consideration shall be given to the projects compatibility with abutting residential property.



Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	2002/2003 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6

LU 8: FOOTHILL PLAZA

Consider Zoning Ordinance amendments to increase the maximum density and intensity for additional housing opportunities consistent with the corresponding General Plan goals, policies, and plan objectives. New development and redevelopment in this area shall be consistent with applicable General Plan policies and plan, as well as corresponding Zoning Code regulations. During design review, special consideration shall be given to the projects compatibility with the surrounding residential neighborhood.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development fees
Time Frame:	2002/2003 and ongoing
Related Policies:	5.1, 5.2

LU 9: EL RETIRO MASTER PLAN

Continue to ensure development within the El Retiro site consistent with the approved Master Plan and compatible with surrounding uses.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.2, 6.3

COOPERATIVE PLANNING EFFORTS**LU 10: COORDINATION WITH SURROUNDING JURISDICTIONS**

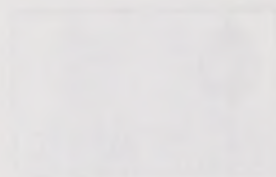
Continue to review and provide input on development applications in surrounding jurisdictions which may impact Los Altos residents and businesses.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.1, 8.2, 8.3

**ANNEXATION****LU 11: PLANNING AREA DEVELOPMENT/ANNEXATION**

Promote orderly and compatible development within the Los Altos planning area. Where appropriate and feasible, consider annexation of adjacent lands.

Responsible Agency/Department:	City Manager, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.4



Page 1 of 1

Page 1 of 1

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

The following information is provided for your information. It is not intended to be used as a basis for any action.

HOUSING ELEMENT





HOUSING ELEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Housing Element	1
Scope and Content of the Housing Element	1
Summary of Goals	2
Efforts to Achieve Citizen Participation	2
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	3

DISCONTINUED PROGRAMS AND QUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES

Discontinued Programs from 1995	4
---------------------------------	---

GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals and Policies	6
--------------------	---

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

HOUSING ELEMENT TECHNICAL APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

H-1	Quantified Objectives (January 1, 1999 – June 30, 2006)	5
H-2	Affordable Second Units	13



HOUSING ELEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
Introduction to the Housing Element	2
How the Housing Element is Developed	3
How the Housing Element is Updated	4
How the Housing Element is Adopted	5
How the Housing Element is Implemented	6
How the Housing Element is Monitored	7
How the Housing Element is Re-evaluated	8
How the Housing Element is Revised	9
How the Housing Element is Amended	10
How the Housing Element is Deleted	11
How the Housing Element is Repealed	12
How the Housing Element is Reinstated	13
How the Housing Element is Re-enacted	14
How the Housing Element is Re-approved	15
How the Housing Element is Re-certified	16
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	17
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	18
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	19
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	20
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	21
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	22
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	23
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	24
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	25
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	26
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	27
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	28
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	29
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	30
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	31
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	32
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	33
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	34
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	35
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	36
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	37
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	38
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	39
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	40
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	41
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	42
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	43
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	44
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	45
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	46
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	47
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	48
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	49
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	50
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	51
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	52
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	53
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	54
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	55
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	56
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	57
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	58
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	59
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	60
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	61
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	62
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	63
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	64
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	65
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	66
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	67
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	68
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	69
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	70
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	71
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	72
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	73
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	74
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	75
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	76
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	77
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	78
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	79
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	80
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	81
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	82
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	83
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	84
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	85
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	86
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	87
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	88
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	89
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	90
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	91
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	92
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	93
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	94
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	95
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	96
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	97
How the Housing Element is Re-validated	98
How the Housing Element is Re-verified	99
How the Housing Element is Re-confirmed	100



INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE HOUSING ELEMENT

The Housing Element of the General Plan is a comprehensive statement by the City of Los Altos of its current and future housing needs and proposed actions to facilitate the provision of housing to meet those needs at all income levels. The policies contained in this Element are an expression of the statewide housing goal of "attaining decent housing and a suitable living environment for every California family," as well as a reflection of the unique concerns of the community. The purpose of the Housing Element is to establish specific goals, policies, and objectives relative to the provision of housing, and to adopt an action plan toward this end. In addition, the Element identifies and analyzes housing needs, and resources and constraints to meeting those needs.

The Los Altos Housing Element is based on seven strategic goals: 1) preservation of the City's rural-suburban atmosphere, 2) attracting families with children, 3) maintaining the existing variety of housing, 4) maintaining and enhancing existing moderate density multifamily zoning districts, 5) ensuring equal housing opportunity, 6) increasing housing opportunities for seniors, and 7) maximizing residential energy-efficiency.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE HOUSING ELEMENT

In accordance with State law, the Housing Element is to be consistent and compatible with other General Plan Elements. Additionally, Housing Elements are to provide clear policy and direction for making decisions pertaining to zoning, subdivision approval, housing allocations, and capital improvements. State law (Government Code Sections 65580 through 65589) mandates the

contents of the housing element. By law, the Housing Element must contain:

- ❖ An assessment of housing needs and an inventory of resources and constraints relevant to meeting those needs;
- ❖ A statement of the community's goals, quantified objectives, and policies relevant to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing; and
- ❖ A program that sets forth a five-year schedule of actions that the local government is undertaking or intends to undertake to implement the policies and achieve the goals and objectives of the Housing Element.

The housing program must also identify adequate residential sites available for a variety of housing types for all income levels; assist in developing adequate housing to meet the needs of low- and moderate-income households; address governmental constraints to housing maintenance, improvement, and development; conserve and improve the condition of the existing affordable housing stock; and promote housing opportunities for all persons.

Although, by nature of the State mandate, the Housing Element tends to focus on the affordability and availability of housing for low- and moderate-income households and families, the Element must also address the housing needs and related policy issues for the entire community, and be consistent with the adopted policies of the rest of the General Plan. For these reasons, the focus of the updated Housing Element will be on policies and programs that can balance the desire of residents to maintain the character of residential neighborhoods, manage traffic, and minimize visual and other impacts of new development, while addressing the needs of low- and moderate-income households and



special needs groups (such as seniors and individuals with disabilities).

This balance will require the City to examine strategies to accommodate higher density housing, mixed use projects in commercial zones, infill developments, and second units without sacrificing other legitimate community goals.

SUMMARY OF GOALS

The Housing Element contains the following seven primary goals:

- 1) Preserve the natural beauty and rural-suburban atmosphere and the high quality of residential neighborhoods in Los Altos.
- 2) Attract families with children to Los Altos.
- 3) Maintain and enhance the existing variety of housing opportunities for individual choice in location and housing type.
- 4) Maintain and enhance the existing pleasant, attractive, moderate density multifamily zoning districts, typically located between commercial and single family residential areas.
- 5) Make housing available without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, gender, or disability.
- 6) Increase housing opportunities for Los Altos' senior population.
- 7) Maximize Los Altos' energy-efficiency.

EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

State law requires cities and counties to make a diligent effort to achieve participation by all segments of the community in preparing a housing element. Section 65583[c][6] of the California Government Code specifically requires that:

The local government shall make a diligent effort to achieve public participation of all economic segments of the community in the development of the Housing Element, and the program shall describe this effort.

The diligent effort required by State law means that local jurisdictions must do more than issue the customary public notices and conduct standard public hearings prior to adopting a Housing Element. State law requires cities and counties to take active steps to inform, involve, and solicit input from the public, particularly low-income and minority households that might otherwise not participate in the process. Active involvement of all segments of the community can include one or more of the following:

- ❖ Outreach to community organizations serving low-income, special needs, and underserved populations;
- ❖ Special workshops, meetings, or study sessions that include participation by these groups;
- ❖ Establishment of an advisory committee with representatives of various housing interests; and
- ❖ Public information materials translated into languages other than English if a significant percentage of the population is not English proficient.



To meet the requirements of State law, the City of Los Altos has completed the public outreach and community involvement activities described below:

Public Meetings and Hearings

The City conducted a special workshop on the Housing Element before the Planning Commission on May 17. The purpose of the workshop was to educate the public on the requirements of housing element law, the contents of a housing element, the process for updating the current Los Altos General Plan Housing Element, and to present preliminary findings regarding changes in community conditions since the early 1990s. The workshop also provided an opportunity for the public to present issues of concern and information relevant to the update.

Information regarding the May 17, 2001, Planning Commission Housing Element workshop was published in the City's "Communique" newsletter in the spring of 2001. This newsletter is sent to all residential and commercial postal customers in the City, including post office boxes. In addition, a display ad was published in the May 9, 2001 edition of the *Los Altos Town Crier* newspaper. Successive notices of Housing Element meetings were also sent by direct mail to 45 community groups, churches, City Commissioners, City Committee members, School District representatives and individuals. Articles regarding the Housing Element update were published in the April 18, April 25, May 23, and August 8, 2001, editions of the *Los Altos Town Crier*.

Two public hearings were conducted on the draft Housing Element prior to its submittal to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for review - a Planning Commission hearing on July 19, and City Council hearings on August 14, and August 20, 2001.

Public hearings on the revised Housing Element were conducted after receipt and consideration of HCD's comments, and prior to City Council adoption of the updated Housing Element. The Planning Commission hearing was conducted on December 20, 2001, and the City Council hearing on February 26, 2002.

Public Notice and Outreach

The City prepared notification using a variety of media and techniques to inform the public and interested organizations of the update process, and to solicit participation by all segments of the community. In addition to notifying all City Council, City Commission and General Plan Advisory Committee members of the update status, a community mailing list was also utilized that included community groups, religious organizations, other public agencies and interested individuals.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

State law requires that the Housing Element contain a statement of "the means by which consistency will be achieved with other General Plan elements and community goals" (California Government Code, Section 65583[c][6][B]). There are two aspects of this analysis:

- 1) An identification of other General Plan goals, policies, and programs that could affect implementation of the Housing Element or that could be affected by the implementation of the Housing Element, and
- 2) An identification of actions to ensure consistency between the Housing Element and affected parts of other General Plan elements. The 1987-2005 General Plan contains several elements with policies related to housing. These policies and the



means for achieving consistency are summarized in the Housing Element General Plan Consistency Appendix

DISCONTINUED PROGRAMS AND QUANTIFIED OBJECTIVES

DISCONTINUED PROGRAMS FROM 1995

Hotel/Motel Conversion

Evaluate the City's existing motel property for potential conversion to long-term affordable rental housing. If such a conversion is feasible, amend the Zoning Ordinance to require that hotels and motels which do not maintain at least 90 percent of their rooms for transient occupancy purposes convert all non-transient rooms to long-term affordable rental units.

Quantified Objectives: In addition to the 19 existing very low-income units at the Four Seasons Motel, up to 60 additional affordable rental units could be added as a result of the conversion of existing motel rooms to efficiency apartments.

Reason for Discontinuing Program: Subsequent to the adoption of this program, the City was informed by State HCD staff that motel rooms do not meet building requirements for dwelling units and cannot be counted toward meeting the City's new housing unit objectives. The Four Seasons Motel has also been replaced.

Zoning Revisions

Revise the Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the General Plan Land Use Map.

Quantified Objectives: 180-314 additional dwelling units could be added to the housing stock as a result of rezoning.

Reason for Discontinuing Program: The Zoning Ordinance was revised subsequent to the 1995 General Plan update. Minor amendments to the Zoning Ordinance, including proposed changes in this Housing Element update, are made periodically based on annual evaluations of the effectiveness of the City's zoning. The City estimates that Zoning Ordinance amendments since 1995 to create the AH/MU overlay zone, expand second living unit opportunities, and to implement other programs will potentially add over 200 dwelling units to the City's housing stock.

Determination of "Regional Fair Share"

When the Association of Bay Area Governments makes an "initial determination of local shares of the regional housing needs," the Community Development Department shall assess that determination and report the information to the City Council within 30 days of receipt of the initial determination.

Reason for Discontinuing Program: The program was accomplished with the adoption of the 1999-2006 Regional Housing Needs Determination.

Housing Needs

Establish an advisory committee of individuals knowledgeable about housing issues for the purpose of identifying housing needs and solutions.

Reason for Discontinuing Program: This program was established to guide the preparation of the 1995 Housing Element update, which was a substantial modification of the previous Housing Element. The 2001 updated Housing Element is a minor modification of the 1995 version, with most of the policies and programs remaining substantially the same.



Funding Sources

Determine the availability of funding sources and evaluate their potential use to achieve affordable housing. Continue use of CDBG funds for projects such as the Low Income Housing Fund and the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition land purchases.

Reason for Discontinuing Program: The use of CDBG funding for affordable housing is considered on an annual basis by the City Council. The Federal Government restricts these funds to housing projects and services for low and very-low income persons.

Affordable Housing

Evaluate applications of zoning techniques for implementation of Policy 20 and in mixed-use and other multifamily applications. Adopt an ordinance which sets forth mechanisms for affordable housing.

Reason for Discontinuing Program: This action has been completed.

Non-conforming Residential Units

Inventory and require use permits for existing non-conforming residential units. Require an annual report regarding rent and occupancy of such uses.

Reason for Discontinuing Program: The City feels that it's not practical to conduct an accurate inventory. In addition, the use permit requirement could encourage owners to demolish non-conforming units, which are a source of lower-cost housing in the community.

Table H-1.
Quantified Objectives (January 1, 1999 – June 30, 2006)

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Above Moderate	Total
Accommodate RHND Allocation	38	20	56	147	261
New Construction	25	20	25	147	217
Housing Rehabilitation	10	20	N/A	N/A	30
Home Sharing Matches	20	20	10	N/A	50
Homeless Assistance	15	N/A	N/A	N/A	15
Conserve Existing Rentals*	–	–	–	–	627

Source: City of Los Altos and Parsons, September 2001.

*The City does not have sufficient records to ascertain the income levels to which existing rental housing is affordable.

Note: Sites and Programs listed in Table 33 and 34 of Appendix B list the entire City's housing potential. These numbers exceed the City's quantified objectives for January 1, 1999 through June 30, 2006, and, therefore, will not all be developed within the next five years.



GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 1: Preserve the natural beauty and rural-suburban atmosphere and the high quality of residential neighborhoods in Los Altos.

Policy 1.1: The City shall restrict commercial uses in residential neighborhoods.

Policy 1.2: If transitional land use zoning is not possible or inadequate to buffer, multifamily and senior housing, will be encouraged between commercial and public/quasi-public, and single-family neighborhoods. Setbacks, sound walls, protective vegetation and on-site landscaping will be required as a buffer when transitional land use zoning is not possible.

Policy 1.3: New design, construction, and remodeling permits for all residential development will be reviewed for impacts on the privacy of adjacent homes and the character of the neighborhoods.

Policy 1.4: The City shall ensure that the level of development permitted in the creation of land divisions results in an orderly and compatible development pattern, within the subdivision and in relation to its surroundings; provides for quality site planning and design; and provides for quality structural design.

Goal 2: Attract families with children to Los Altos.

Policy 2.1: The City shall preserve the desirable neighborhoods, good schools, spacious yards, safe streets, and community spirit of Los Altos.

Goal 3: Strive to maintain the existing variety of housing opportunities for individual choice in location and housing type.

Policy 3.1: The City shall maintain General Plan land use categories that provide for a range of residential densities. Existing zoning provides for single-family large lots on one acre or more to high-density multifamily developments of up to 38 dwelling units per acre.

Policy 3.2: The City shall encourage development which contains a combination of land uses; 1) mixed-use, commercial, and residential development in commercial areas; and 2) mixed-use, senior, and institutional in public/quasi-public areas.

Policy 3.3: The City shall encourage development which contains a mix of commercial and multifamily residential within commercial areas.

Policy 3.4: The City shall continue to conserve the stock of small houses in areas of small lot sizes.



Policy 3.5: The City shall encourage the preservation and improvement of the existing housing stock to minimum housing standards, including existing non-conforming housing uses.

Policy 3.6: The City shall ensure that the needs of children are provided through design review and land use regulations, including open space, parks and recreation facilities, pathways, bikeways, play yards, etc.

Policy 3.7: The City shall encourage the development of affordable second dwelling units that conform with zoning regulations.

Policy 3.8: The City shall promote and encourage homesharing matches.

Goal 4: Maintain and enhance the existing pleasant, attractive, moderate density multifamily zoning districts, typically located between commercial and single-family residential areas.

Policy 4.1: The City shall encourage the conservation of the present rental stock represented by units in the City's existing multifamily districts, particularly rental housing affordable to low- or moderate-income households.

Policy 4.2: The City shall encourage the development of new rental units in the existing multifamily districts.

Policy 4.3: The City shall support case-by-case review of property owner initiated rezoning from Office

to Medium-Density Multifamily in the Fremont-Giffin Office District.

Policy 4.4: The City shall continue to require that new multifamily housing projects must include units affordable and available to households of very low- and low-income.

Goal 5: Strive to make housing in the City available to all regardless of age, sex, race, ethnic background, marital status, veteran status, religion, or physical disability.

Policy 5.1: The City supports non-discrimination in housing.

Goal 6: Increase housing opportunities for Los Altos' senior population.

Policy 6.1: The City shall promote services and education to help seniors maintain their independence and remain in their own homes as long as possible.

Policy 6.2: The City shall assure that senior housing conforms and harmonizes with surrounding neighborhoods and shall encourage that it be located near transportation and services.

Policy 6.3: The City shall encourage a variety of senior housing opportunities, including building type, degree of care, and form of ownership.

Policy 6.4: The City shall allow senior housing on designated sites according to the provisions of the City's PUD/SC ordinance



and the underlying zoning regulations.

Policy 6.5: The City shall discourage projects developed as senior-only projects from converting to other uses.

Policy 6.6: The City shall seek, maintain, and publicize a list of resources or service providers to help seniors maintain and/or rehabilitate their homes.

Policy 6.7: The City shall allow senior housing with extended care facilities in multifamily and mixed-use zoning districts.

Goal 7: Maximize Los Altos' energy efficiency.

Policy 7.1: The City shall encourage energy conservation measures to reduce energy consumption in residential, governmental, and commercial buildings.

Policy 7.2: The City shall promote the use of solar energy in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

Policy 7.3: The City shall continue to implement building and zoning standards to encourage energy efficiency.



HOUSING PROGRAMS

The following programs provide actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Housing Element. The Housing Programs are a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and 1995-1999 program achievements.

H-1: NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL BUFFERING

Minimum standards will be enforced for buffers between commercial uses and public/quasi-public uses, and residential properties. Enforcement will occur through the development permit review process as provided in the Zoning Ordinance. Buffering will include a combination of landscaping, minimum setback, or yard requirements, and stepped-back building heights.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Planning Commission
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing
Achievements 1995-1999:	The City's Zoning Ordinance sets development standards among commercial uses, public/quasi-public uses and other properties. Development standards are also implemented through the City's architectural design review process.

H-2: EVALUATE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS

Regularly review and adjust, if appropriate, criteria, objectives, and procedures for design review of residential construction to be compatible in terms of bulk and mass, lot coverage, and proportion with houses in the immediate vicinity. This program will set criteria under which development must be reviewed by the City staff, Architectural and Site Control Committee, or the Planning Commission.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Planning Commission, City Council
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing, with comprehensive zoning ordinance update scheduled for 2003
Achievements 1995-1999:	The City has continued to regularly review and update the residential design review criteria to balance the concerns of neighborhoods with the City's obligations under State law, and to accommodate its regional housing allocation and reduce impediments to the availability of housing for all income groups. Los Altos has been able to achieve compatible residential design without requiring unreasonable, expensive design or construction modifications in new housing.

**H-3: ZONING AND DESIGN STANDARDS**

Continue to implement residential zoning and development standards, with appropriate design review, to ensure compatibility of housing with neighborhood character, minimum open yard space, and streets that are safe for alternative means of travel. Encourage residential development patterns that facilitate pedestrian and bicycle use and neighborhood interaction.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development Planning Commission, City Council
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing, with comprehensive zoning ordinance update scheduled for 2003
Achievements 1995-1999:	Implementing Action H-3 has been accomplished as part of Implementing Action H-2 (see evaluation of achievements above).

H-4: GENERAL PLAN LAND USE RANGES

The City of Los Altos will maintain an appropriate range of General Plan land use categories, implemented through appropriate Zoning Ordinance standards, to allow for a variety of housing densities and types (in appropriate locations) to accommodate housing needs at all income levels and special needs groups (such as seniors, large families, and individuals with disabilities).

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Planning Commission, City Council
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing
Achievements 1995-1999:	The City's General Plan continues to include a range of land use categories and densities. Mixed-use and single-use projects of a wide range of densities were approved during this period.

H-5: AH/MU ORDINANCE

The City will continue to implement the Affordable Housing/Mixed-Use (AH/MU) zoning regulations that permit multifamily residential projects along the El Camino Real commercial corridor. The City will continue to encourage and support projects that provide for a mix of senior housing and/or multifamily housing, and retail space in commercial areas through the AH/MU regulations.

The City will consider amending the Ordinance to not only allow, but to require, that future development proposals include a housing component, with a specified percentage of affordable housing, unless the applicant can demonstrate that housing is not financially feasible.

As noted above, the El Camino Real AH/MU designated corridor in particular has been identified in the Land Use Element as an area where affordable housing can be created as properties redevelop. Incentives to build housing along El Camino Real, such as allowing additional building stories and



increasing allowable floor area, are included in the Land Use Element. Disincentives to build commercial-only projects, such as reduced allowable floor area, are also included. Similar mixed-use development incentives are also being considered for Los Altos' other business districts.

Responsible Body:	Community Development, Planning Commission, City Council
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing.
Achievements 1995-1999:	The City's original objective for this program was to create 30 affordable dwelling units. This objective was not entirely achieved between 1995 and 1999 due to market conditions that did not create sufficient incentives for the development of affordable housing, even with density bonuses and other incentives offered by the City. As a result of the AH/MU regulations, eight low-income restricted units were required and are anticipated to be built in the near future.

To assure that some affordable housing units will be created, the City has imposed the following requirements in the AH/MU overlay-zoning district:

- ❖ Affordable housing required. A minimum of 20 percent low-income or 10 percent very low-income housing shall be provided as part of any new residential construction and/or conversion of an existing structure to residential use.
- ❖ In all mixed-use projects proposed in a residential (R) zoning district, a minimum of 40 percent of the gross floor area shall be maintained for residential use, of which a minimum of 20 percent low-income or ten percent very low-income housing shall be provided.

H-6: MIXED-USE PROJECTS IN COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Continue to implement the affordable housing mixed-use policies developed for El Camino Real, and expand the application of these policies to other commercial districts in the City including CN (Commercial Neighborhood), CS (Commercial Service), CD (Commercial Downtown), and CRS (Commercial Retail Service). Development incentives will be included for these districts that will encourage the development of affordable housing in these identified commercial areas. The designation of areas and incentives will occur as part of the General Plan update currently in process.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Planning Commission, City Council
--------------------------------	---



Funding Source:
Time Frame:
Achievements 1995-1999:

Permit fees
Current and ongoing.
Due to renewed City efforts, a mixed-use development project has been proposed that achieves the objective of this program. The Loyola Plaza mixed-use office/residential project proposes a 6,000 square foot office building fronting eight low-income residential units. The project has been approved by the City Council and security bonds have been posted to ensure its completion. Development incentives were granted by the City Council to make the project feasible.

H-7: VOLUNTARY CODE INSPECTION

Continue the voluntary code inspection program encompassing code compliance, rehabilitation, energy conservation, and minimum fire safety standards.

Responsible Agency/Department:
Funding Source:
Time Frame:
Achievements 1995-1999:

Community Development
Inspection fees
Current and ongoing
The City has not maintained records on the number of voluntary inspections provided since 1995. However, the City believes that this program should be continued to provide an option for interested homeowners to ensure compliance with building code requirements.

H-8: CODOMINIUM CONVERSION

The City will continue to implement the Condominium Conversion Ordinance to protect against the conversion or demolition of rental units. It shall require buildings in multifamily zoning districts initially built as rental units which have not been converted to condominiums to be reconstructed as rental units unless there is greater than a 5 percent vacancy rate.

Responsible Agency/Department:
Funding Source:
Time Frame:
Achievements 1995-1999:

Community Development
Permit fees
Current and ongoing
The City's Condominium Conversion Ordinance has been effective in maintaining the limited supply of rental housing in Los Altos. No condominium conversions have been approved since 1995. Although the restrictions could potentially decrease homeownership opportunities for a small number of moderate-income households, the loss of rental units would create a much greater loss of affordable housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income households.

**H-9: SECOND DWELLING UNITS**

Continue to implement second dwelling unit regulations to provide increased opportunities for the development of affordable second units. The City will continue to implement the following actions annually:

- ❖ Promote awareness of regulations which allow the construction of new second units consistent with City regulations through public information at the Community Development Department public counter, inclusion in the City's newsletter, *Communiqué*, press releases, City cable television channel, and utility bill inserts.
- ❖ Continue to require a verification and quantification procedure regarding rent and occupancy as a condition of the use permit.

Responsible Agency/Department:

Funding Source:

Time Frame:

Achievements 1995-1999:

Community Development Dept.

Permit fees

Current and ongoing

The Zoning Ordinance allows for a detached second dwelling unit to be permitted on a lot or parcel within a single family residential zoning district that has a minimum of the greater of 150 percent of the lot area required in the residential zoning district in which the second living unit is proposed to be located, or 15,000 square feet of lot area. A lesser lot size is required if the second unit is attached to the main residence. Findings for approval include that a public benefit will result because the proposed second living unit will be maintained as affordable for very low- and low-income households. The Zoning Ordinance provides for verification and quantification regarding rent and occupancy upon the granting of a use permit.

The second dwelling unit program began as a two-year pilot program. Permits were issued for four affordable and six market-rate second living units between 1995 and 1997. Three of the affordable second units house families of low- income, and one affordable second unit houses a family of very low-income. The six market rate second units can be assumed to house families of moderate-income or higher. At the end of the two-year pilot period, the City amended the Zoning Ordinance to require that all new second units be affordable to very low- and low-income occupants. Since 1995, 18 second units have been approved. The City's objective was 20



units; therefore this program has been relatively effective.

The City publicizes the availability of the second unit option through a press release and articles published in the *Communiqué*. Table H-2 summarizes second unit permits issued by the City.

Table H-2
Affordable Second Units

Address	Lot Size	Unit Size	Type
Affordable Second Living Unit Approved from 4/95 to 4/97			
420 Yerba Santa	54,000	2,000	Conversion of Existing Space
1749 Austin	11,520	560	Addition to Detached Pool House
2456 Foothill	14,187	600	New Detached
1840 Dalehurst	10,000	500	Conversion of Existing Space
Market-Rate Second Living Units Approved from 4/95 to 4/97			
124 Alvarado	22,000	412	Attached
71 W. Edith	11,441	550	Existing Non-conforming Use
215 N. El Monte	23,000	632	Added to Detached Garage
124 University	15,500	640	New Attached
200 University	20,000	640	New Detached
288 Avalon	15,400	640	New Detached
Market Rate Second Living Unit Approved after 4/97			
131 Garland	20,000	640	New Detached
1043 Eastwood	18,122	630	New Attached
425 Covington	31,000	640	New Attached
Affordable Second Living Units Approved After 4/97			
47 View	38,560	840	New Attached
655 Springer Terrace	18,694	800	New Attached
632 Girallda	14,805	800	New Attached
829 Laverne	15,040	800	New Detached
447 Benvenue	19,625	794	Detached

Source: City of Los Altos, Community Development Department, July 24, 2001.

**H-10: HOMESHARING SERVICES**

The City identifies and contacts organizations that provide and promote home sharing arrangements among homeowners with living space to share and individuals seeking affordable housing. The City collects program, contact, and application information from these organizations and makes these available to the public through the Community Development Department's public information counter and the Los Altos Senior Center. The availability of home sharing programs and program information is publicized through the *Spotlight* and *Communiqué* newsletters, publications of the Los Altos Senior Center and the City of Los Altos.

The Senior Center currently offers a homesharing program called "Project Match," which pre-screens individuals seeking rooms to rent for seniors with rooms to spare.

The City estimates that over the next five years 20 matches will be made.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development Dept., Senior Center
Funding Source:	General Fund, Donations to Project Match, Senior Center
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing
Achievements 1995-1999:	Project Match utilizes the Senior Center in Los Altos to meet with residents and coordinate homesharing matches, and has set up 18 matches for residents of Los Altos between July 1997 and July 1, 2001.

H-11: HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The City will continue to assist in the provision of housing assistance in Los Altos for low-income households with other public agencies and private non-profit organizations that offer rental assistance, home repairs, and first-time homebuyer assistance. To minimize overlap or duplication of services, Los Altos will undertake the following actions:

The City will support County and non-profit housing rehabilitation programs by providing program information to interested individuals through handouts available at City Hall, the Los Altos Senior Center, the Los Altos Library, and the Woodland Branch Library;

The City will contact previous rehabilitation applicants when new funding becomes available and post a legal notice in the newspaper when housing rehabilitation funds become available and;

The City Council will continue to contribute CDBG funds to housing programs each year as it sets budget priorities and receives requests from non-profit and other service organizations. The CDBG Budget for the year 2002-2003 is \$175,000. The City is planning on using \$76,000 to rehabilitate a senior housing project called Stevenson House, home to some former Los Altos residents. The project is located in Palo Alto. The remaining funds will be used to make American Disability Act (ADA) improvements at various locations in the City.



Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, City Council
Funding Source:	CDBG funds
Time Frame:	Continue to implement program guidelines and administrative procedures for home repair program, and continue other actions through 2006.
Achievements 1995-1999:	The Cooperative Rehabilitation Program is part of the County of Santa Clara Housing and Community Development (HCD) Program. Funds provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are used to benefit seven participating cities and the unincorporated areas of the county by encouraging homeowners to improve their properties. Low cost loans are provided for home repairs to homeowners who meet income eligibility requirements established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). There have been ten low-income dwelling units rehabilitated in Los Altos with assistance from this program between 1990 and 2001. The City does not have a redevelopment project area that generates local tax increment funding for affordable housing contributions, so any City contribution to affordable housing programs would have to come from its annual CDBG allocation or the City's General Fund. The City Council will consider housing program contributions each year as it sets budget priorities and receives requests from non-profit and other service organizations.

H-12: PARTICIPATION IN THE REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS DETERMINATION

The City will actively participate in the preparation of the 2006-2013 ABAG Regional Housing Needs Determination. The City will meet with ABAG staff during the preparation of the RHND in 2005-2006 to provide land use, housing, employment, and other information related to the RHND formula. The City will comment on the draft RHND and seek to ensure that the allocation accurately represents the City's fair share of the region's housing needs.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Fall 2004 through June 2006
Achievements 1995-1999:	This is a new program not included in the 1995 Housing Element.

**H-13: ANNUAL STATUS REPORT**

Provide an annual status report to the City Council and State HCD on the status of the General Plan Housing Programs and their implementation as required by State law.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Annually
Achievements 1995-1999:	Community Development Department staff provided periodic updates to the City Council on implementation of the Housing Element.

H-14: DENSITY BONUSES

Continue to implement density bonuses and other incentives as provided by State law and City zoning ordinance.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing, continue through 2006
Achievements 1995-1999:	Two residential developments containing the minimum required percentage of affordable housing qualified for a density bonus. An application for a 10-unit apartment complex was approved with two additional low-income density bonus units, and an application for an 80-unit condominium project provided eight low-income units, but did not seek a density bonus.

H-14: SENIOR HOUSING DENSITY BONUSES AND DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Provide density bonus increases in the Cuesta-Lassen multifamily district of up to 38 dwelling units per acre for projects which are senior-only. Provide expanded development incentives for senior-only projects in this district. Consider increased densities and development incentives for senior and affordable housing projects in all multifamily districts.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing, continue through 2006
Achievements 1995-1999:	Although the option of density bonuses in this district are still available, no senior-only projects have been submitted since 1995 to qualify for this density bonus. To increase the effectiveness of this program, the City will consider expanded development incentives for the Cuesta-Lassen district to encourage residential developments that are designed for seniors only.

**H-15: DIVERSITY OF HOUSING**

Require a diversity in size of units for projects in mixed-use or multifamily zones.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Planning Commission, City Council
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing
Achievements 1995-1999:	The City's AH/MU and multifamily zoning requirements encourage a variety of dwelling unit sizes. Since 1995, many multi-family dwelling units of varying sizes have been constructed, from studio units to three bedroom apartments.

H-16: MULTIFAMILY DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

(See Housing Element Technical Appendix for a summary of Multifamily Zoning Requirements)
Continue to implement the multifamily district development standards to ensure that the maximum densities established can be achieved and that the maximum number of units is required to be built.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Planning Commission, City Council
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing
Achievements 1995-1999:	The City's Zoning Ordinance requires maximum densities to be achieved in the Multiple Family Residential zones, and market conditions have assured that development proposals typically contain the maximum number of units allowed under zoning. The City anticipates that this will be the case in the future as well.

H-17: ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

If necessary for the development of affordable housing projects, and when requested by the project sponsor, the City of Los Altos will assist in securing funding for low- and moderate-income housing developments through one or more of the following actions:

- ❖ Appropriating a portion of the City's annual CDBG allocation for projects that serve the Los Altos community.
- ❖ Provide funding to participate in a multi-jurisdictional housing finance program (such as a Mortgage Revenue Bond or Mortgage Credit Certification Program).
- ❖ The City will apply for State and Federal Funds on behalf of a non-profit, under a specific program to construct affordable housing.



Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, City Council
Funding Source: CDBG funds, State or Federal grant funds
Time Frame: January 1, 2002 and ongoing thereafter through 2006
Achievements 1995-1999: The City contributed \$176,000 of CDBG funds to an affordable housing project in Cupertino. The City has also participated in the County's Mortgage Credit Certificate Program, although no such certificates were issued between 1995 and 2001. The City believes that this program should be continued, however, since Mortgage Credit Certificates and CDBG funding may still provide valuable tools for assisting in the development of affordable housing.

H-18: HOUSING DISCRIMINATION

Continue to provide a service to refer individuals to organizations or agencies who handle complaints about discrimination, landlord-tenant relations, etc. Complaints regarding discrimination will be referred to the Mid-Peninsula Citizens for Fair Housing, Santa Clara County, and other appropriate fair housing agencies. Complaints regarding landlord-tenant problems will be referred to the Los Altos Mediation Program, the County of Santa Clara Office of Consumer Affairs or other appropriate local agencies.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Funding Source: CDBG funds, General Fund
Time Frame: Current and ongoing through 2006
Achievements 1995-1999: The City maintains information on equal housing opportunity at its public counters at City Hall, the Senior Center, and the public library. The City provides referral services to individuals seeking further information regarding State and Federal fair housing requirements, or wishing to file discrimination complaints. The City has not requested specific information in the past on the number of individuals from Los Altos who have contacted Mid-Peninsula or Santa Clara County.

H-19: HOMELESSNESS AND EMERGENCY AND TRANSITIONAL HOUSING

Continue to participate in a joint advisory committee from Los Altos and other adjacent cities to address homeless and emergency and transitional housing issues and potential solutions. Emergency and transitional housing facilities may be permitted under a conditional use permit within public and community facilities zoning districts.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, City Council, Community Services Agency
Funding Source: General Fund, CDBG funds
Time Frame: Current and ongoing through 2006



Achievements 1995-1999:

The City's original objective for this program was to facilitate temporary housing for 15 individuals through "rotating" shelters on church sites. This objective has been achieved. The City has participated in annual meetings of neighboring jurisdictions to discuss regional problems and solutions related to homelessness and to identify regional agencies and resources that can address homeless issues. The City believes that this regional approach provides the best opportunity for addressing the causes of homelessness and homeless service needs, which cross municipal boundaries. No homeless or transitional service providers have requested conditional use permits for facilities in Los Altos since 1995. The City will continue to consider allowing such uses under the conditional use permit process for Public and Community Facilities zoned land.

H-20: ENERGY EFFICIENCY REGULATIONS

The City shall continue to implement building code and zoning standards that promote energy efficiency in residential design, layout, construction, and landscaping. The City enforces energy efficiency standards of Title 24 of the California Code of Regulations (State Building Code Standards) and uses zoning requirements for lot size, building separation, yards, setbacks, landscaping, and design review to promote energy conservation in new development.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Permit fees
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing through 2006
Achievements 1995-1999:	As part of its planning and building permit process, City staff reviews applications for compliance with building code and Zoning Ordinance requirements affecting energy efficiency and solar access.

H-21: ENERGY CONSERVATION

The City shall continue to promote residential energy conservation through consumer information published by governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and utility companies, including information on financial assistance and rebates for energy efficient home improvements. The City will make information available through the public counter of the Community Development Department, at the Los Altos Senior Center, through the public libraries, and through the *Spotlight* and *Communiqué* newsletters.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, CDBG fund
Time Frame:	Current and ongoing through 2006



Achievements 1995-1999:

The City has made energy efficiency and consumer information available through its public counters at City Hall, public libraries and in its regular communications with City residents and builders.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT





The following information is being furnished to you for your information and is not to be used for any other purpose. It is the property of the Department of the Interior and is loaned to you for your use only. It is to be returned to the Department of the Interior when you are no longer using it.

The Department of the Interior is responsible for the management and conservation of the Nation's natural resources. It is the Department's policy to provide information to the public in a timely and accurate manner. The Department is committed to the protection of the environment and the preservation of the Nation's natural resources. The Department is also committed to the protection of the Nation's cultural resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's historic resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's scientific resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's artistic resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's literary resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's musical resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's dramatic resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's film resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's television resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's radio resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's newspaper resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's magazine resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's book resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's record resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's tape resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's video resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's audio resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's visual resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's literary resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's musical resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's dramatic resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's film resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's television resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's radio resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's newspaper resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's magazine resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's book resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's record resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's tape resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's video resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's audio resources. The Department is committed to the protection of the Nation's visual resources.

Section 100 - General Statement

The following information is being furnished to you for your information and is not to be used for any other purpose. It is the property of the Department of the Interior and is loaned to you for your use only. It is to be returned to the Department of the Interior when you are no longer using it.

Copyright, 1980, by the Department of the Interior.
 Printed in the United States of America.
 All rights reserved.
 No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission in writing from the Department of the Interior.

Copyright, 1980, by the Department of the Interior.
 Printed in the United States of America.
 All rights reserved.
 No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission in writing from the Department of the Interior.

Section 101 - General Statement

The following information is being furnished to you for your information and is not to be used for any other purpose. It is the property of the Department of the Interior and is loaned to you for your use only. It is to be returned to the Department of the Interior when you are no longer using it.

Copyright, 1980, by the Department of the Interior.
 Printed in the United States of America.
 All rights reserved.
 No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission in writing from the Department of the Interior.

Copyright, 1980, by the Department of the Interior.
 Printed in the United States of America.
 All rights reserved.
 No part of this publication may be reproduced without permission in writing from the Department of the Interior.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Economic Development Element	1
Scope and Content of the Economic Development Element	1
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	1
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	2

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Existing Conditions and Projections	3
Fiscal Balance	5
Commercial Vitality	7
Future Conditions	9

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Existing Economic Conditions	11
Fiscal Balance	11
Commercial Vitality	12

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

ED-1	Historic and Projected Economic Data	4
ED-2	City and County Taxable Sales Data	7

LIST OF FIGURES

ED-1	Los Altos Commercial Centers	6
------	------------------------------	---

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

1	Overview of the Economic Development Element
1	Statement of Purpose and Goals for the Economic Development Element
1	Statement of Vision and Mission
1	Statement of Core Values and Principles

Economic Development Plan

2	Business Development and Promotion
2	Job Development
2	Entrepreneurship
2	Small Business

Health, Safety and Welfare

11	Working Environment Conditions
11	Occupational Safety
11	Community Welfare

Environmental Protection Program

List of Tables

20-1	Health and Safety Program Schedule
20-2	Occupational Safety Program Schedule

List of Figures

20-1	Health and Safety Program Schedule
------	------------------------------------

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

Although Los Altos is mostly built out, with relatively few vacant parcels available for large-scale development, many opportunities exist for expanding the existing commercial and employment base. As described in the Land Use Element, development efforts within specified areas will allow new investment and complementary uses to meet local and regional shopping needs, provide expanded job opportunities, and build the City's tax base.

PURPOSE OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The Economic Development Element is an optional element under California law, rather than a mandatory element of the General Plan. The purpose of the Economic Development Element is to maintain and enhance the economic character of the community.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The Economic Development Element is comprised of four sections: 1) Introduction; 2) the Economic Plan; 3) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs Appendix. The Plan section provides background information and describes how the Economic Development goals and policies will be achieved. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues related to the city's economy are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of community desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for working with local and regional agencies to ensure the economic

viability of the community. The Implementation Programs Appendix identifies specific implementation programs for the Economic Development Element.

RELATED LAWS, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

This Element provides the overall framework for decision making that affects economic development in the City. More detailed plans set forth specific strategies for economic development, and establish regulations and standards for focus areas. As discussed in the Land Use Element, specific plans and area or district plans are regulatory documents which work in concert with the General Plan to accomplish the City's goals and policies. Plans and programs specifically focused on economic development are as follows:

Loyola Corners Specific Plan

The Loyola Corners Specific Plan was adopted in 1990 for the 17-acre commercial area near the intersection of Fremont and Miramonte Avenues with Foothill Expressway. The first goal of the plan is to create attractive and functional shopping and commercial use facilities in order to increase use and provide for long term viability of the area.

Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan

In 1999, the City adopted the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan for the 26-acre commercial area southeast of El Camino Real and San Antonio Road. Economic revitalization of the plan area is one of the primary goals.



Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) Ordinance

The City adopted an Ordinance establishing provisions for the Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) zoning district, which applies to property located in the downtown area. Findings and provisions thereof encourage retail uses for economic and aesthetic purpose.

Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee

The Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee was established for the City of Los Altos and Los Altos Hills to promote local economic development strategies. Two members of the Los Altos City Council sit on the committee.

Downtown Urban Design Plan

In 1992, the City adopted the downtown Urban Design Plan to reinforce the identity of Downtown as a retail center, to improve the visual quality of the area, and to create an attractive pedestrian environment.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

According to State planning law, the Economic Development Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. All of the elements are interdependent, as well as being interrelated. Certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of issues throughout the General Plan creates a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Economic Development Element is most directly related to Land Use, Circulation, Community Design & Historic Resources, and Housing Elements.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

In all cities, interdependence exists between local economic issues and the overall quality of life. Los Altos is a mature community with little undeveloped land. With a limited commercial base, Los Altos is considered primarily a residential community.

Economic development efforts will focus on the development, redevelopment and intensification of the El Camino Real corridor, Foothill Plaza and the Downtown core as described in the Land Use Element, as well as other business districts suitable for redevelopment. Background information and specific strategies are provided in this section of the Element.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROJECTIONS

Demographics

According to the U.S. Census, the population in Los Altos in year 2000 was 27,693 persons. The planning area for Los Altos had a population of 31,900 in 2000. Because the community is nearly built out, the rate of local population growth over the last two decades has been substantially slower than Santa Clara County and the Bay Area region. As identified in the Housing Element, the population in Los Altos is not significantly diverse in terms of ethnicity and the age distribution favors an older population. To the contrary, Santa Clara County and the Bay Area became more ethnically and age diverse throughout the 1990s.

In 2000, there were 10,462 households in Los Altos, primarily in low-density single-family residential units. While the number of households in Los Altos did not change substantially throughout the 1990s, Santa Clara County

and the Bay Area region experienced substantial household growth during the period.

Employment

During the 1990s, the total number of jobs in Los Altos grew by almost ten percent to 11,840 jobs, primarily in the industry sectors of retail and service. In Santa Clara County during this same period, the rate of job growth was over 20 percent and the job base was more diverse. Job opportunities were no longer tied to a handful of high-tech sectors, but expanded to complementary and competitive industry clusters. Companies and jobs began to move from the urban centers, causing cities ringing the edges of the region to grow.

While the Los Altos work force makes up less than half of its population (15,900 employed residents in 2000), the majority of its residents hold higher-paying managerial and professional jobs. Most of the jobs in Los Altos are retail, service, and government-oriented jobs. Therefore, the economic well-being of Los Altos residents is dependent upon the economic vitality of the County and the region.

ABAG projects that between the years 2000 and 2020, jobs in the Bay Area will be more diversified and the technology center in Silicon Valley will be diffused, resulting in a more broad-based regional economy that is less volatile than in recent years. In Santa Clara County, the rate of job growth is expected to slow from recent years as information technology companies disperse. However, the County is still expected to be the regional leader in adding new jobs through 2020.

During the forecast period to 2020, Santa Clara County will add 231,000 new jobs, 30 percent of which are anticipated in the manufacturing sector and 50 percent in the service sector. Los Altos is expected to add 1,050 new jobs by 2020, the majority of which would be in manufacturing/wholesale, retail,



and other job sectors. Projected population and job growth in the City are comparable, while job growth in the County is projected to outpace population growth. See Table ED-1.

The average household income in Los Altos grew 30 percent in the 1990s to \$159,300. During that same period, household income in Santa Clara County grew almost 23 percent to \$86,300. ABAG projects household income in the City and County to grow 27 and 22 percent, respectively by the year 2020.

In Santa Clara County, high paying service sector jobs are closely linked to the manufac-

turing sector. If growth (in terms of sales volume and productivity) does not continue in the electronics industry due to declining market share or maturation of the industry, the demand and/or ability to pay for professional services would level off or decline. The demand for related business service jobs such as engineers, management consultants, and computer programmers could decline, and pay scales may be driven down. Because the City's labor force is concentrated in the high paying end of the service spectrum, it is vulnerable to these potential long-term structural changes.

**Table ED-1
Historic and Projected Economic Data**

LOS ALTOS PLANNING AREA CHARACTERISTICS	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2020	% Change 2000-2020
Total Population	29,438	31,900	8.4 %	35,000	9.7 %
Employed Residents	15,192	15,900	4.6 %	18,400	15.7 %
Total Jobs	10,800	11,840	9.6 %	12,890	8.9 %
Ag/Mining Jobs	230	250	8.5 %	200	- 20.0 %
Manufacturing/Wholesale Jobs	670	680	1.5 %	790	16.2 %
Retail Jobs	2,650	3,170	19.6 %	3,610	13.9 %
Services Jobs	5,140	6,010	16.9 %	6,360	5.8 %
Other Jobs	2,110	1,730	- 18.0 %	1,930	11.5 %
Household Income	122,200	159,300	30.0 %	202,100	26.9 %
SANTA CLARA COUNTY CHARACTERISTICS	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	2020	% Change 2000-2020
Total Population	1,497,577	1,755,300	17.2%	2,016,700	14.8 %
Employed Residents	812,345	928,700	14.3 %	1,137,800	22.5 %
Total Jobs	890,930	1,077,220	20.9 %	1,308,220	21.4 %
Ag/Mining Jobs	7,210	7,430	3.1 %	7,010	-5.6 %
Manufacturing/Wholesale Jobs	339,880	348,670	2.6 %	418,800	20.1 %
Retail Jobs	129,700	149,250	15.1 %	169,270	13.4 %
Services Jobs	270,230	390,470	44.5 %	504,430	29.2 %
Other Jobs	143,910	181,400	26.1 %	208,710	15.1 %
Household Income	70,300	86,300	22.8 %	105,300	22.0 %
Source: Association of Bay Area Governments Projections 2000					



FISCAL BALANCE

The City must formally monitor the changing economic indicators and conditions of the subregion to anticipate the impacts of the subregional economy on Los Altos and the City of Los Altos, thereby assuring that the City's fiscal policies are related to their economic context.

Economic Base

The majority of the approximately 11,840 jobs in the Los Altos planning area are in the commercial sector, which is composed of retail and office/service uses. Retail uses are typically small-scale and are dispersed among Downtown and half-a-dozen other commercial areas (shown in Figure ED-1).

During the 1990s, Los Altos experienced growth of retail, office, and personal service uses. Office uses have expanded along San Antonio Road, the El Camino Real corridor, and in the Downtown triangle. Personal services, such as beauty salons that only incidentally involve retailing, have replaced some retail shops resulting in a loss of sales tax revenues to the City and interruption of retail frontage. This change in the mix of commercial uses is not altogether desirable – it reduces sales tax revenue; it can eliminate retail business needed or desired by the community; and it can sap the vitality of a retail area by reducing the synergy that comes from a pattern of retail location that is concentrated, with retail uses adjacent to one another and not interrupted by “dead space.”

The popularity of large retail centers grew throughout the 1990s. Large retailers require a significant amount of property to accommodate buildings and parking. To better serve a regional customer base, such businesses also prefer freeway visibility and arterial accessibility. Given the limitations in the size of commercial property and lease space in Los Altos, the City is not well positioned to

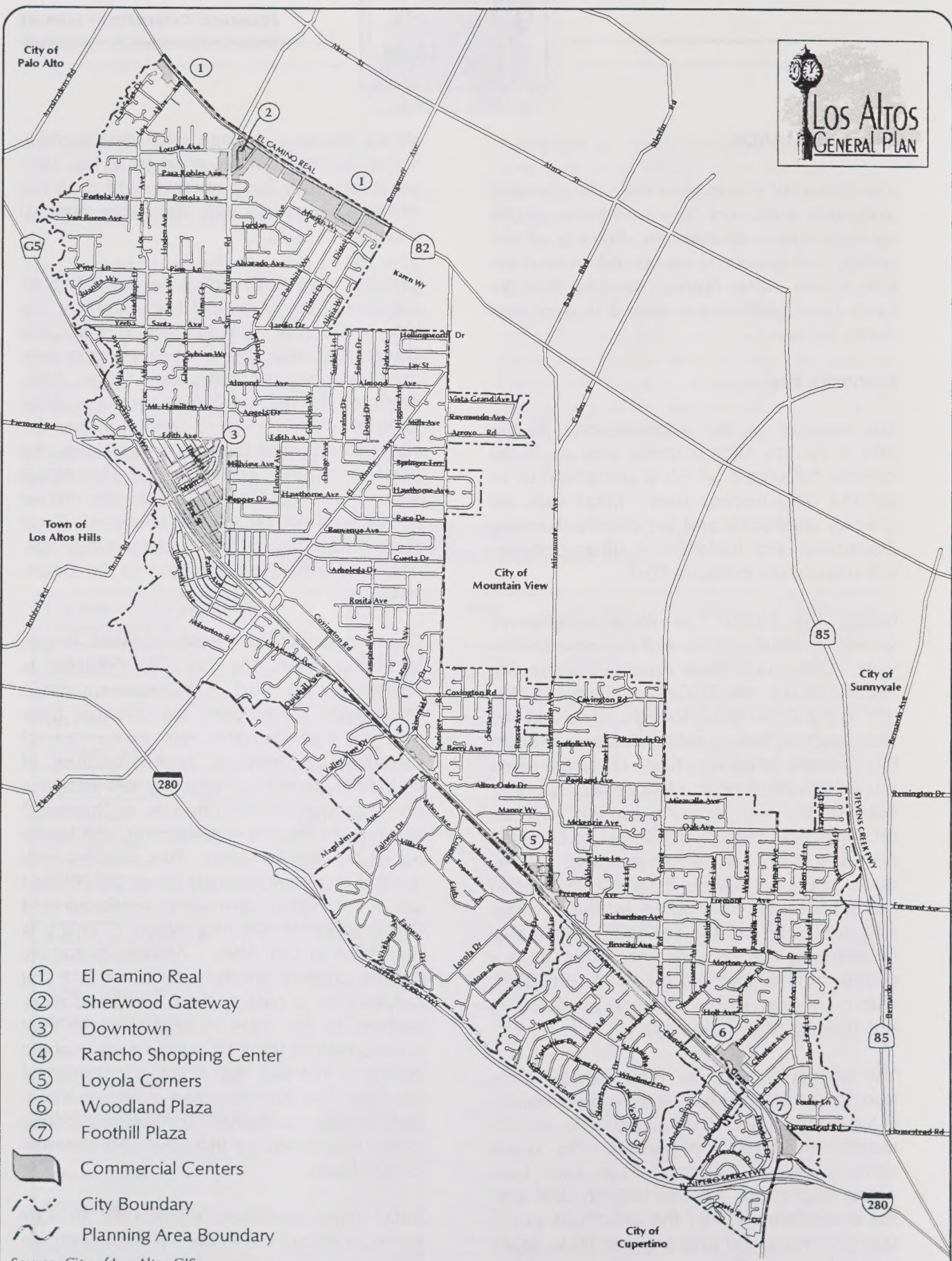
attract this type of large retail development. Rather, commercial development in Los Altos serves primarily local residents and does not generally compete with the large regional shopping centers.

Looking toward the future, an important dimension of the commercial development picture is the mix of businesses in the City's commercial areas. Whereas shopping centers can select tenants, cities often allow, limit, eliminate, or redirect businesses. Los Altos took this step in 1983 to prevent further displacement of retail uses by banks, savings and loans, and other offices in the Downtown area. More recently (2001), the City refined the allowed use list in the Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) Zoning District to encourage specific uses in particular portions of the Downtown.

Commercial land use policy presents important fiscal issues. The City's fiscal situation is related to the mix of businesses. Since Proposition 13, property tax revenues have not grown at the same rate as the cost of providing city services, largely because of limitations placed on property tax increases unless property is sold (the sale, or “turnover” of property triggers reassessment, and hence a property tax increase). This, coupled with the fact that approximately 80 percent of land use in Los Altos is devoted to residential land use, means that “the Proposition 13 effect” is magnified in Los Altos. Another factor impacting property tax revenue is the fact that property tax is paid to the County and redistributed to the cities in proportion to their contribution to the total assessed value of the county. Without significant non-residential tax base, Los Altos receives a disproportionately smaller tax payout than its neighboring cities with significant industrial and commercial tax bases.

Retail uses contribute significantly to City revenues through sales tax. In most cases, an office use would have to be developed at a

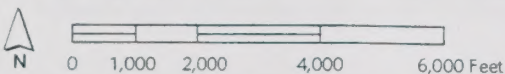
City of
Palo Alto



- ① El Camino Real
- ② Sherwood Gateway
- ③ Downtown
- ④ Rancho Shopping Center
- ⑤ Loyola Corners
- ⑥ Woodland Plaza
- ⑦ Foothill Plaza

- Commercial Centers
- City Boundary
- Planning Area Boundary

Source: City of Los Altos GIS.



City of
Cupertino

Figure ED-1
Commercial Centers



much greater intensity than a retail use in order to generate, through property tax and business licenses, the same amount of revenue that retail stores generate for the City through sales taxes. Loss of retail uses would diminish the City's tax base.

While retailing has a fiscal edge over other kinds of commercial uses, there appears to be a market for non-retail uses. Some of the pressure for office development stems from the prestige value of a Los Altos address. For that reason, it may be possible to develop office space in Los Altos and achieve acceptable levels of occupancy, even when vacancy rates are high elsewhere. If office development is encouraged, revenue generating vehicles will be needed to assure equitable taxation of commercial areas and that the change will be fiscally positive for the community.

Figures from the Board of Equalization show that taxable sales in Los Altos are low in relation to personal income when compared to most other cities in Santa Clara County. Table ED-2 lists the total and retail taxable sales in Los Altos and Santa Clara County between 1997 and 2000. Retail sales in the City were stagnant during the 1980s, but retail activity and employment potential have grown in recent years. In 2000, retail sales in Los Altos grew 12.4 percent and total sales grew 17.4 percent. Comparatively, retail sales and total sales in Santa Clara County in 2000 grew by 17.8 and 22.9 percent, respectively. While Los Altos sales figures have grown in recent years, it is important to note that retail sales have grown at a rate slower than overall sales and per capita data shows a growth in food stores/restaurant sales and a decline in general merchandise sales.

Table ED-2
City and County Taxable Sales Data
(in thousands of current dollars)

Taxable Year	City of Los Altos		Santa Clara County	
	Retail Sales	Total Sales	Retail Sales	Total Sales
2000	\$ 187,406	\$ 244,839	\$ 19,773,484	\$ 37,303,662
1999	\$ 166,698	\$ 208,468	\$ 16,781,972	\$ 30,348,644
1998	\$ 155,753	\$ 193,431	\$ 15,000,747	\$ 27,488,815
1997	\$ 152,163	\$ 188,841	\$ 14,363,950	\$ 26,951,487

Source: State Board of Equalization

COMMERCIAL VITALITY

As previously mentioned, commercial development and corresponding sales tax play an important role in the quality of life for Los Altos residents. In year 2000, sales tax comprised approximately 15 percent of the City's total general purpose revenues, which

are used to provide services to the community. While actual sales tax has superseded budgeted expectations in recent years, a significant decline in sales tax would have a negative impact on Los Altos.

There are seven primary commercial areas in Los Altos. The list below identifies each of



the commercial areas described in this section. See Figure ED-1 for locations.

- ❖ Downtown
- ❖ El Camino Real
- ❖ Sherwood Gateway
- ❖ Loyola Corners
- ❖ Rancho Shopping Center
- ❖ Woodland Plaza
- ❖ Foothill Plaza

Downtown

Downtown is the commercial core of the greater Los Altos area and is the historic center of the City. Located in a triangular area, Downtown is bound by Foothill Expressway to the southwest, San Antonio Road to the east, and Edith Avenue to the north. Unlike all other commercial developments in the City, Downtown has a pedestrian-oriented development and design pattern, which creates a unique, small-town atmosphere. The Downtown is treasured by Los Altos as the "heart" of the City.

In a proactive approach to ensure the functional and aesthetic integrity and economic vitality of the Downtown, the City adopted special plans and provisions for the area. These actions are described below.

Downtown Urban Design Plan: In 1992, the City adopted the Downtown Urban Design Plan to reinforce the identity of downtown as a retail center, to improve the visual quality of the area, and to create an attractive pedestrian environment. The plan establishes a use and design review process, along with specific solutions and priorities for implementing the specified urban design concepts.

Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) Zone: In 2001, City Council adopted special use provisions and specific design criteria for the CRS Zoning District to retain and enhance the village atmosphere and pedestrian-oriented environment of the commercial core of Down-

town. The district allows only retail and limited service uses on the first floor with other uses allowed on the second floor.

The Land Use Element identifies the Downtown as one of the few areas of the City for potential land use intensification. New policies introduce a residential land use component and allow the potential for an increased floor area ratio for housing above the ground floor within the commercial core.

El Camino Real

Located at the northern edge of Los Altos, El Camino Real is a commercial corridor shared with both Palo Alto and Mountain View. This corridor presents a unique economic opportunity for the City. Unlike the other smaller commercial developments in Los Altos that are located on two- and four-lane roads surrounded by residential neighborhoods, El Camino Real is a six-lane arterial with contiguous larger scale commercial development and property. Therefore, more intense commercial development throughout this corridor will not jeopardize the small-town residential character of the City.

As specified in the Land Use Element, El Camino Real is identified as one of the few areas in the City with opportunity to redevelop or intensify existing development. Most of the land along the corridor is designated Commercial Thoroughfare, which allows a wide variety of more intense commercial uses. New policies in the Land Use Element allow the potential to encourage retail and residential use throughout the corridor as follows:

- ❖ Retail use may be encouraged on the first floor with the incentive of an increase in the allowable floor area ratio;
- ❖ As a disincentive for exclusive office development, the allowable floor area ratio for such projects may be reduced; and



- ❖ Finally, if housing is included as part of a mixed-use project, the height limit may be increased from two- to three-stories.

To address the diversity in development type and scale between communities, Los Altos and Mountain View should establish improvement standards for a consistent and pedestrian-friendly streetscape. Streetscape improvements should include sidewalk design and dimension, streetlights, street trees and median planting, sidewalk furniture, and signs. As identified in the Land Use Element, special consideration shall be provided to nearby Los Altos residences to address potential impacts from non-residential development along El Camino Real. Where residences adjoin commercial areas, the proposed commercial development should be evaluated with respect to its surroundings. The privacy, solar access, and noise environment of the adjacent residential areas should be preserved or improved.

The El Camino Real corridor serves as a gateway to Los Altos from the north. Two commercial centers are located at this northern gateway, where El Camino Real intersects San Antonio Road: Sherwood Gateway and Village Court.

In an effort to establish a plan for revitalization of this area, the City adopted the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan. The Specific Plan comprehensively addresses land use, circulation and parking, site planning, and design guidelines for the 26-acres on east of the intersection of El Camino Real and San Antonio Road. Implementation of this Specific Plan will ensure greater harmony in the development patterns at the City's northern gateway.

Loyola Corners

Loyola Corners is a 17-acre neighborhood commercial area located just off Foothill Expressway at Fremont and Miramonte Ave-

nues. Most of the commercial buildings are small single-story structures built in the late 1940s to early 1960s. The Loyola Corners Neighborhood Commercial Center Specific Plan was adopted in 1990 to improve the aesthetics, use, and vitality of the area. The Specific Plan also addresses circulation and compatibility with surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Rancho Shopping Center

Rancho Shopping Center is well known for its innovative 1950s architecture with covered walkways, landscape, and store-front parking configuration. This is the largest shopping center in Los Altos with dozens of stores and offices. Retaining the village character of the center and maintaining access to Springer Road are the primary goals for this center.

Woodland Plaza

Woodland Plaza fronts Grant Road (a frontage road along Foothill Expressway) south of Newcastle Drive. This small community shopping center includes a variety of retail and office uses.

Foothill Plaza

Foothill Plaza is located on Homestead Road near the intersection of Foothill Expressway and Interstate 280. This shopping center houses a wide variety of uses and is positioned at the southern gateway to Los Altos.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

The appearance of Los Altos, its location within a particularly affluent area of the region, and its historical role as a local retail center suggest that the community's future economy may focus on retailing. Recent economic conditions and local retail sales data indicate that Los Altos is well positioned for retail growth and revitalization. Through-



out the 1990s, the City focused its efforts on land use regulations and area plans that ensure a successful and appropriate mix of commercial uses and development to meet the needs of Los Altos residents and visitors.

Public and private efforts will be required to ensure the success of future retailing in the City, which in turn, ensures the maintenance and improvement of City services for Los Altos residents. This retail focus is a critical element of the Los Altos General Plan. This focus is important to the City's fiscal vitality and for maintaining the unique small-town character and identity that so many residents value. The goals, policies, and programs set forth in this chapter reflect the philosophy of retaining retail primacy in the local economy, and look toward ways of restoring and reinforcing that primacy for the benefit of the entire community.

The goals, policies, and programs in this Element and the Land Use Element reinforce development strategies of the City's shopping centers and commercial areas. Most of the commercial developments in Los Altos are neighborhood commercial shopping centers. Goals and policies for these neighborhood commercial centers focus on providing retail and service uses to meet the needs of nearby residents and ensuring compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.

The General Plan also recognizes the unique characteristics and opportunities of the City's Downtown and the El Camino Real corridor. In these two commercial areas, goals and policies focus on promoting retail use, incorporating the option for a residential component, and allowing for intensification of development. Given that non-retail commercial development is less fiscally advantageous than retailing, exclusively office uses are discouraged and retail uses are encouraged on the ground floor with the option for office and services uses on the second floor. Potential incentives for mixed-use with a residential

component include an increase in the floor area ratio and/or number of stories.

Overall, the General Plan supports retailing. The intent of the retail-related goals and policies is the restoration and enhancement of retail vitality in the City's shopping areas. The Plan strengthens the retail sector by concentrating retail activities, discouraging non-retail land uses, and providing both physical amenities and program support for retailing in established commercial areas, without physically expanding those areas.





ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

The structure of the City's economy plays an important role in the physical development of the planning area and the stability of the local tax base. The issues, goals, and policies in this section are intended to provide direction as to how the community can focus resources to retain local businesses, attract new commercial enterprises, support the tax base, and continue to provide public services for existing and future residents of Los Altos.

Major issues addressed by the goals, policies, and plan of the Economic Development Element are as follows:

- 1) Existing economic conditions;
- 2) Fiscal balance; and
- 3) Commercial vitality.

Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Element.

EXISTING ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Los Altos is primarily an affluent residential community with less than four percent of the land area designated for commercial land use. In recent years, property and sales tax comprise approximately 27 and 15 percent of the City's total general purpose revenues, respectively.

As identified in the Housing Element, most of the jobs held by Los Altos residents are managerial and professional positions. However, the majority of jobs available in the City are retail, service, and government-oriented. Therefore, the majority of Los Altos' employed residents commute to jobs in surrounding jurisdictions.

Economic conditions in Los Altos are directly related to the economic conditions of Santa Clara County and the Bay Area region. While the population, development, and total job growth in Los Altos is growing at a rate slower than both the County and region, household income is higher and growing at a faster rate.

The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) projects that over the next 20 years, jobs in the region will be more diversified and the technology center in Silicon Valley will be diffused, resulting in a more broad-based regional economy. In Santa Clara County, job growth is expected to slow from recent years as information technology companies disperse. However, the County is still expected to be the regional leader in adding new jobs and households during the 20-year-period from 2000 to 2020. In Los Altos, the projected number of employed residents is expected to outpace local job growth slightly with proportionally significant job growth in the manufacturing/wholesale, retail, and other job sectors.

FISCAL BALANCE

Commercial development is important to Los Altos since it provides the City with the financial resources necessary to meet the community's needs for public services and facilities. While commercial uses provide important benefits to Los Altos, the City needs to balance these benefits with the impacts of commercial activities on surrounding neighborhoods. Targeting a commercial strategy that meets residents' needs within the community, rather than attracting people from outside the City, is one way to minimize traffic and other impacts related to people traveling to the community.

Goal 1: Formulate a commercial strategy that is fiscally sound for the City.



Policy 1.1: Actively seek a desirable mix of businesses that reinforce the unique community identity.

Policy 1.2: Balance community tax revenue needs with the benefits of retaining a business mix that serves community shopping and service needs.

COMMERCIAL VITALITY

There are several commercial areas within Los Altos including: Downtown, El Camino Real, Sherwood Gateway, Loyola Corners, Rancho, Woodland, and Foothill Plaza (See Figure ED-1). The majority of these areas are developed, and future development will focus on upgrading and redeveloping these commercial districts to ensure their continued vitality. Potential impacts to surrounding neighborhoods will be assessed when developing and implementing revitalization plans for each commercial area.

Goal 2: Promote the economic and commercial success of all commercial districts in Los Altos.

Policy 2.1: Promote an optimum mix of commercial uses in existing commercial locations to meet both the shopping needs of residents and fiscal needs of the City.

Policy 2.2: Work to attract businesses that utilize smaller shops and/or smaller storefronts, which are in keeping with the character of the community.

Policy 2.3: Work with property owners and business associations to improve the functioning of commercial areas, including

their viability, appearance, cleanliness and accessibility.

Policy 2.4: Promote City/private cooperation to attract a balanced mix of businesses that emphasize a healthy proportion of retail uses, minimizing service and office uses in retail zones.

Policy 2.5: Work with property owners and business associations to ensure an adequate supply of attractive parking with convenient access, as well as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, to accommodate patron and employee needs in all commercial areas in Los Altos.

Policy 2.6: Consider the impact of traffic on surrounding neighborhoods when considering new commercial development.

Downtown

Downtown is the City's central commercial core, located in a triangular area formed by the boundaries of Foothill Expressway to the southwest, San Antonio Road to the east, and Edith Avenue to the north. This area is characterized by speciality and convenience retail development, some professional office, and both personal and business service uses with two-lane roadways and on-street diagonal parking on Main Street. In 1992, the City adopted the Downtown Urban Design Plan establishing a vision for development and improvements within the area. Downtown is one of the few areas of the City identified for potential intensification in the Land Use Element.

Goal 3: Increase the attractiveness of Downtown area to shoppers and pedestrians to enhance the economic vibrancy of the area.



Policies and programs related to appearance and design are located in the Community Design and Historic Resources section.

Policy 3.1: Improve and seek to eliminate current perceived and real difficulties in finding parking places.

Policy 3.2: Actively work to retain successful existing businesses.

Policy 3.3: Continue to implement the Downtown Urban Design Plan.

Policy 3.4: Seek businesses in the Downtown area with the potential to:

- ❖ attract shoppers,
- ❖ provide additional retail and entertainment opportunities,
- ❖ provide unique businesses that meet the everyday needs of residents, of the greater Los Altos area as well as businesses with regional attraction,
- ❖ directly enhance sales tax revenue and property tax revenues to the City,
- ❖ attract residents and visitors during the night, as well as the day,
- ❖ provide needed services for residents, and
- ❖ be consistent with the existing pedestrian oriented scale of downtown development.

Policy 3.5: Allow mixed-use development with multi-family residential and commercial uses to provide alternative housing op-

portunities within the community.

Policy 3.6: Limit ground floor uses to retail and limited personal services in the Downtown Commercial Retail Sales District, with a special emphasis on retail uses on Main and State Streets.

Policy 3.7: Promote the retention of a post office in the Downtown.

Policy 3.8: Work with the businesses that have their backs to San Antonio Road to create an attractive, friendly presentation.

Policy 3.9: Work to ensure that the Downtown is a clean, attractive and safe area.

El Camino Real

The El Camino Real commercial corridor is located at the northern end of the City, functioning as a gateway to Los Altos from Palo Alto and Mountain View. This area is characterized by a mix of existing land uses, including offices, retail stores, personal services, and lodging. El Camino Real is an area with some underdeveloped land and opportunity to re-develop or intensify existing development as described in the Land Use Element.

Goal 4: Increase the economic potential of the El Camino Real commercial area.

Policy 4.1: Promote retail land use.

Policy 4.2: Look for opportunities to intensify uses while avoiding adverse impacts on surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Policy 4.3: Promote the development of mixed-use commercial and



residential developments within the El Camino Real area to provide housing opportunities within the community.

Policy 4.4: Discourage the division of land and encourage the aggregation of parcels in the El Camino Real commercial area.

Policy 4.5: Designate El Camino Real as the principal area for intensification of commercial and residential development.

Sherwood Gateway

Sherwood Gateway is a commercial shopping center located on 26-acres southeast of El Camino Real and San Antonio Road. A Specific Plan was adopted for this area in 1999 with economic revitalization as a primary goal.

Goal 5: Increase the economic potential of and visually upgrade the Sherwood Gateway.

Policies and programs related to appearance and design are located in the Community Design and Historic Resources section and the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan.

Policy 5.1: Recognize that the accessibility and visibility of the Sherwood Gateway commercial area are important to the overall business environment of Los Altos, and that this area functions as a visual and commercial entrance to Los Altos.

Policy 5.2: Continue to implement the improvements identified in the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan.

Policy 5.3: Encourage a unified architectural approach to commercial development between Sherwood Triangle and Village Court (across San Antonio Road).

Policy 5.4: Encourage high-revenue-generating businesses for the area.

Policy 5.5: Participate with business owners and property owners to implement revitalization of the area.

Policy 5.6: Consider establishing a redevelopment project area for the Sherwood Gateway.

Loyola Corners

Loyola Corners is a commercial shopping center on 17-acres near the intersection of Fremont and Miramonte Avenues with Foothill Expressway. In 1990, the City adopted a Specific Plan for this project for the purpose of improving aesthetics, increasing use, and ensuring long term viability of the area.

Goal 6: Improve the economic viability of Loyola Corners: address the needs of improved traffic, parking, and architectural design.

Policies and programs related to appearance and design are located in the Community Design and Historic Resources section and the Specific Plan for Loyola Corners Neighborhood Commercial Center.

Policy 6.1: Retain the neighborhood/convenience commercial character of the area, supplemented on a limited basis with specialty retail and general professional office uses.



- Policy 6.2:** Retain and promote low intensity retail uses consistent with neighborhood commercial needs.
- Policy 6.3:** Improve compatibility of commercial and adjacent residential land uses.
- Policy 6.4:** Continue to implement the improvements identified in the Loyola Corners Neighborhood Commercial Center Specific Plan.
- Policy 6.5:** Improve circulation in the Loyola Corners/Foothill Expressway area, and ensure adequate on-site parking.

Other Commercial Centers

Other small commercial centers in Los Altos include Rancho, Woodland, and Foothill Plaza, all of which are located along Foothill Expressway.

Goal 7: Maintain healthy neighborhood businesses in Neighborhood Commercial zones along Foothill Expressway.

- Policy 7.1:** Retain emphasis on neighborhood-serving retail use and personal service uses.
- Policy 7.2:** Require beautification of commercial areas.
- Policy 7.3:** Determine the appropriate maximum development for Rancho Shopping Center, Woodland Office Plaza, and Foothill Plaza, ensuring adequate parking is provided on site.
- Policy 7.4:** Evaluate the accessibility, visibility, and potential for intensification of Foothill Plaza for destination-oriented uses.



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness

The Implementation Programs Appendix provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and plans for City elected officials, staff and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Programs are to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a measure, procedure, or technique that requires additional City action. This action may either occur on a City-wide basis or in specific areas within the City. The City Council, by relating the Implementation Programs to the General Plan, recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

Use of the General Plan Implementation Program

The Implementation Programs are intended for use in preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the California Government Code. Because some of the individual actions and programs described in the Implementation Programs Appendix act as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by Section 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This Implementation Programs Appendix may be updated annually with the budget process and whenever the City's



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Economic Development Element. The Economic Development Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Economic Development Element.

FISCAL BALANCE

ED 1: COMMERCIAL STRATEGY

Develop a fiscally sound commercial strategy to encourage a mix of uses that meet the City's needs and provide sufficient tax base to maintain adequate community service levels as follows:

- 1) Periodically study typical tax revenues generated by Los Altos business types to determine the kinds of businesses that are advantageous to Los Altos;
- 2) Monitor the impact of City controlled taxes to establish the level of such taxes that will attract desired businesses to and maintain them in Los Altos;
- 3) Continue to evaluate and decide the desirable maximum potential build-out in each of the City's commercial areas;
- 4) Identify methods to retain successful existing businesses;
- 5) Identify and target businesses that will enhance commercial vitality;
- 6) Review the permitted and conditionally permitted uses in the various zoning districts with respect to commercial vitality; and
- 7) Monitor land use in each commercial area with the intention of assuring that departing businesses are replaced by new uses consistent with City goals.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, City Manager
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Annual
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 2.4, 3.2, 3.4, 4.1, 4.3, 5.4, 7.1

COMMERCIAL VITALITY

ED 2: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Continue to participate in the Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Committee for the City of Los Altos.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, City Manager
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	5.5

**ED 3: DOWNTOWN**

Facilitate economic development of the Downtown as follows:

- 1) Encourage land use intensification of the Downtown Core for mixed-use development with an emphasis on retail development on the ground floor (especially on Main and State Streets) consistent with the applicable General Plan policies and plan;
- 2) Work to improve both real and perceived parking issues relative to overall numbers and proximity to businesses;
- 3) Implement the Downtown Urban Design Plan and Downtown Commercial Retail Sales (CRS) Zoning District; and
- 4) Work with the Los Altos Village Association and Chamber of Commerce to publicize shopping opportunities Downtown.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, City Manager
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.8

ED 4: EL CAMINO REAL COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

Increase the economic potential of the El Camino Real Commercial Corridor by:

- 1) Allowing land use intensification throughout the area consistent with the land use and economic development policies outlined in the General Plan;
- 2) Promoting the development of mixed-use commercial and residential and discourage development of exclusively office uses; and
- 3) Implementing the Sherwood Gateway Specific Plan and the Thoroughfare Commercial (CT) Zoning District.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, City Manager
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4

ED 5: NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL CENTERS

Improve the economic vitality of the City's neighborhood commercial centers by:

- 1) Promoting a mix of uses that meet the consumer needs of residents and the fiscal needs of the City;
- 2) Working with individual business owners and collective business associations to improve their appearance, marketing, access, and parking;
- 3) Implementing the Loyola Corners Neighborhood Commercial Center Specific Plan; and
- 4) Improving the compatibility of new commercial development and redevelopment with surrounding residential neighborhoods.



Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, City Manager
Funding Source: General Fund, Development Fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.1, 2.3, 6.3, 6.4, 7.1

OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION AND
COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT



OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION AND
COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT



OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element	1
Scope and Content of the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element	1
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	2
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	2

OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

Open Space and Conservation Plan	4
Community Facilities and Services Plan	8

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Open Space Resources	11
Natural Resources	12
Parks and Recreational Facilities and Programs	12
Community Facilities and Services	13
Cooperative Services	14

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

LIST OF TABLES

OCC-1	City Park Sites	7
-------	-----------------	---

LIST OF FIGURES

OCC-1	Open Space and Natural Resources	6
OCC-2	School District Boundaries and Location	9



OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

1	Purpose of the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
2	Relationship to the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
3	Relationship to the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
4	Relationship to the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

5	Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
6	Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

7	Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
8	Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
9	Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
10	Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
11	Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

List of Tables

12	Table 1: Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
----	--

List of Figures

13	Figure 1: Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element
14	Figure 2: Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element

OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

Some of Los Altos' most valuable assets include the City's parks, open space, creeks, and public services. The Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element focuses on the protection and enhancement of such resources and public facilities/services to ensure a high quality living environment for years to come.

PURPOSE OF THE OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

The Los Altos Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element meets the state requirements for Conservation & Open Space Elements as defined in Sections 65302(d) and 65301(e) of the Government Code. According to these requirements, the Conservation Element must contain goals and policies to protect and maintain natural resources such as water, soils, wildlife and minerals, and prevent wasteful resource exploitation, degradation and destruction. The Open Space Element must contain goals and policies to manage open space areas, including undeveloped lands and outdoor recreation areas. Specifically, the Open Space Element must address several open space categories such as those used for the preservation of natural resources and managed production of resources, as well as open space maintained for public health and safety reasons.

The Community Facilities Element is an optional, rather than a mandatory element of the General Plan, which addresses community need for public services. Specifically, the purpose of the Community Facilities Element is to ensure sufficient levels of service in terms of law enforcement, police protection, public

education, and a variety of public services. The subjects addressed under the Conservation Element, Open Space Element, and Community Facilities Element have direct relationships and overlap one another substantially; therefore these elements have been combined for Los Altos.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

The Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element convey community goals to protect and maintain natural resources and public services. Resources addressed in this element include open space, natural resources and features, parks and recreation, law enforcement and fire protection, public education, and community, social, civic, and cultural services.

The Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element is comprised of four sections: 1) Introduction; 2) the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Plan; 3) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs Appendix. The Plan provides background information and explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues related to the provision of natural resources and public services are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of the community's desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for working with local and regional agencies protecting and maintaining natural resources and planning public facilities and services at sufficient levels. The Implementation Programs Appendix identifies specific implementation programs for the



Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element.

RELATED LAWS, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

A number of existing plans and programs exist which directly relate to the goals of the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element. Enacted through state and local action, these plans and programs are administered by agencies with responsibility for their enforcement.

Quimby Act

Section 66477 of the Government Code provides local jurisdictions with the authority to acquire park land in association with new land divisions. Commonly referred to as the Quimby Act, this provision of state law allows a city, by ordinance, to require the dedication of land, payment of an in-lieu fee, or a combination of both, for park and recreational purposes as a condition on approving a subdivision map. Los Altos has adopted such an ordinance to require the dedication of land and/or the payment of in-lieu fees for the purpose of providing park and recreational facilities.

Watercourse Protection Regulations

Los Altos adopted regulations to protect the City's watercourses by requiring the maintenance of waterways to keep them free of debris, excessive vegetation and other obstacles that have the potential to pollute, contaminate, or significantly retard water flow. Property owners along the City's watercourses are required to obtain a permit for discharges/deposits into the waterway or to modify the land or structures abutting the waterway. The regulations also establish special setbacks and development provisions along Adobe Creek from Shoup Park to O'Keefe Lane.

Parks, Arts, and Recreation Commission

The purpose of the City's Parks, Arts and Recreation Commission is to advise the City Council in all matters pertaining to parks, arts, and public recreation. The Commission also advises the City Council on cultural programs sponsored by the City and takes an active role in defining and executing such programs.

Library Commission

The purpose of the Library Commission is to advise the City Council on all matters pertaining to the City libraries and promote adequate and efficient service to the citizens of the community.

Youth Commission

The purpose of the Youth Commission is to advise the City Council on matters relating to youth interests, youth concerns, and the need for outreach services.

Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD)

Through its ordinances, the SCVWD seeks to protect water quality and prevent harmful alteration of watercourses.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

According to state planning law, the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. While all of the elements are interdependent, they are also interrelated to a degree. Certain goals and policies of one element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of issues throughout the General Plan creates a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Open Space,



Conservation & Community Facilities Element is most directly related to Land Use, Circulation, and Community Design & Historic Resources Elements.



OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION, & COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN

This section of the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element is divided into two parts: Open Space and Conservation Plan and Community Facilities and Services Plan.

OPEN SPACE AND CONSERVATION PLAN

A distinct combination of physical setting, natural and improved open space land, creek corridors, and low density residential neighborhoods with mature vegetation provides a unique identity for Los Altos. The Open Space and Conservation Plan establishes an approach to protect and preserve these assets. The Plan addresses the Open Space and Conservation issues identified in the previous section. The related goals and policies serve as the basis of the Plan and are supported by approaches to protect and enhance natural resources. The Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Implementation Programs Appendix is an extension of this plan and contains specific programs to achieve environmental goals related to open space and natural resources.

Open Space Resources

Open space is an important community amenity. Los Altos open space resources include public parks, publicly-owned open space, conservation easements along portions of creeks, off-road bicycle paths/trails, and privately-owned open space and recreation facilities. Other open space land which is not publicly owned or officially designated open space includes school yards, vacant land, and the front and street side yard areas within the City's low density residential neighborhoods.

In addition to providing opportunities for recreation and leisure, open space and parkland enhance aesthetics and community character. This section of the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element describes the strategy to preserve and enhance open space resources within the City.

Designated Open Space: Land for preservation of open space and provision of recreational opportunities is included in the Other Open Space designation in the Land Use Element. This land use designation accounts for approximately 127 acres of land, or three percent of the City's total planning area acreage. The location of designated open space land is depicted on Figure OCC-1.

The Other Open Space designation provides open space for the preservation of natural resources, managed production of resources, outdoor recreation, and protection of health and public safety. Areas designated for Other Open Space include: waterways, open space easements, private and public open space, as well as golf courses and other private recreational uses. Most of the existing open space resources are protected under the current General Plan designations.

In order to preserve and enhance community open space resources, the City will implement a program that supports the joint-venture use of open space areas to reduce City maintenance costs and increase City revenues for maintaining open space resources. Joint ventures could involve other local government agencies, non-profits, and private development of commercial recreation facilities. The City will also coordinate with public and private organizations to provide revenue generating open space uses to protect important open space resources.



Surrounding/Regional Open Space Amenities: Significant regional open space includes Rancho San Antonio Open Space and the Duveneck Windmill Pasture Area. Located southeast of Los Altos in the foothills, Rancho San Antonio includes a 967-acre preserve (meadows, creeks, wildlife, hiking trails) and a 130-acre park. The Duveneck Windmill Pasture is a 761-acre preserve located in Los Altos Hills. The City should continue to encourage cooperative planning of joint facilities and access to regional amenities.

Designated Parkland/Commercial Recreation: The Land Use Element provides a Parks land use designation to protect and utilize open space resources in the City's planning area. This land use designation covers approximately 32 acres of land, or one percent of the total acreage within the planning area. The location of lands designated as Parks is depicted on Figure OCC-1.

The Parks designation provides for publicly owned and dedicated parkland. Activities that may be developed include areas for active sports play, large multipurpose fields for community events and informal recreation, tot lots, picnic areas, multipurpose sports fields and courts, concessions, community event space, outdoor amphitheaters, maintenance/support facilities and caretaker facilities.

Existing park land in Los Altos is minimal, with a ratio of approximately 1.3 acres of dedicated park land per 1,000 residents. The City has adopted a higher standard park dedication requirement for new subdivisions of 5.0 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. In an effort to expand park and recreational facilities and programs, the City will implement options to lease and or purchase additional park sites. The City will also implement programs to encourage public and private development of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and services.

Natural Resources

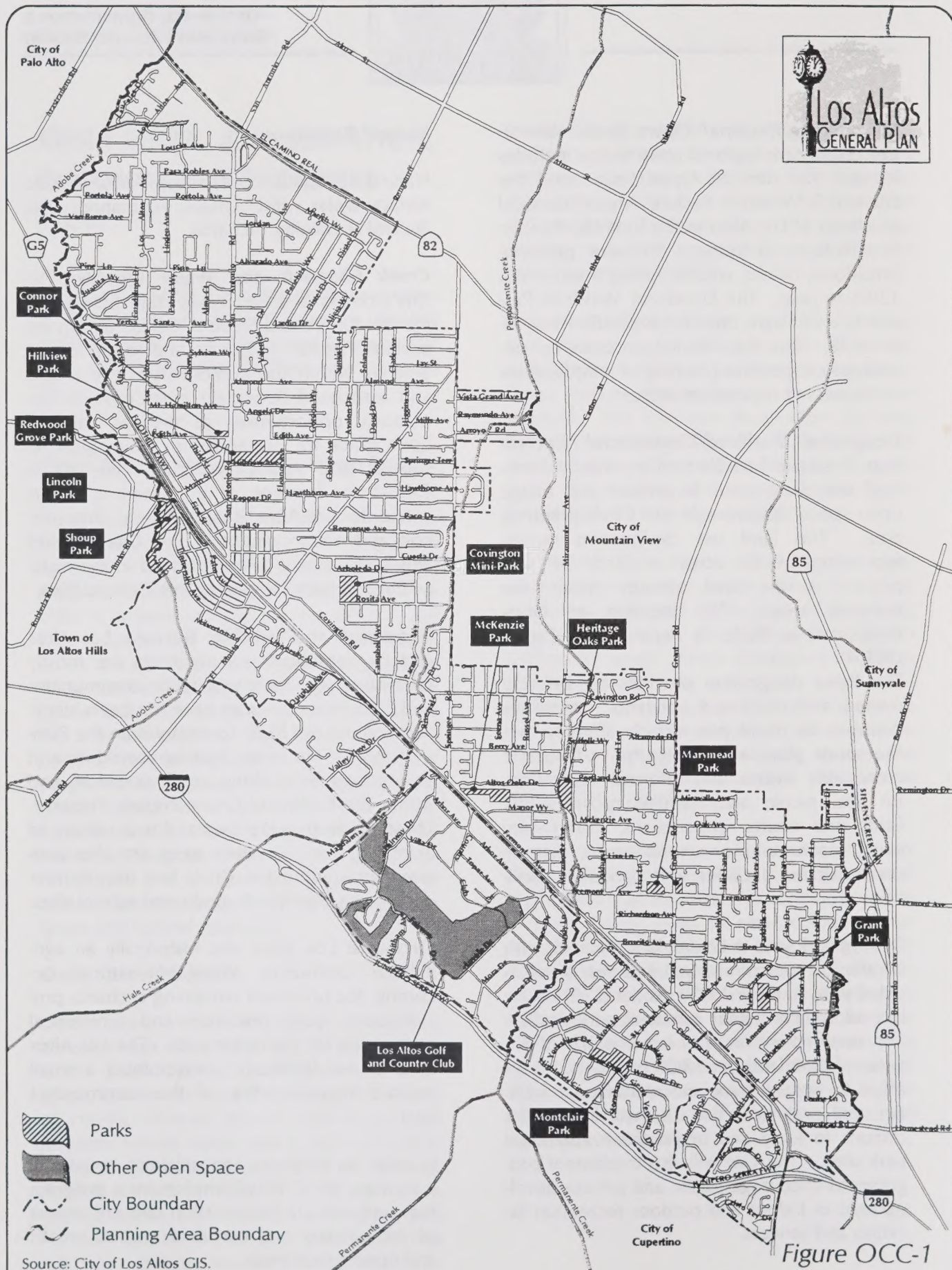
Natural resources within Los Altos include surface water within creeks, vegetation, wildlife and remaining orchards.

Creek Channels and Water Quality: The City's creeks (Adobe Creek, Hale Creek, Permanent Creek and Stevens Creek) are an important natural resource and open space amenity within the community. The creeks and associated floodplain areas provide recreational opportunities as well as valuable open space for preservation of biological resources and riparian habitat. See Figure OCC-1 for location of the creek corridors within the Los Altos Planning Area. Preservation and enhancement of the City's creeks and floodplains is also addressed in the Natural Environment Element of this General Plan.

Vegetation and Wildlife: Because Los Altos and its immediate surroundings are mostly urbanized, significant vegetation communities and biological resources have not been identified and are not likely to exist within the Planning Area. However, riparian corridors and tree groves exist along creek corridors and within the Redwood Grove Nature Preserve. These areas provide habitat for a variety of animal species. Mature trees are also scattered throughout the City's low density residential neighborhoods, parks and school sites.

Orchards: Los Altos was historically an agricultural community. While not naturally occurring, the few small remaining orchards provide open space resources and a historical connection for the community. The Los Altos civic center landscape incorporates a small orchard representative of the community's past.

In order to preserve and enhance its natural resources, the City will implement a program that supports the preservation and enjoyment of the habitats and corridors around creeks and open space areas.



Parks and Recreation Facilities and Programs

To meet the recreational and open space needs of the community, the City must ensure that a variety of park and recreational facilities exist. The City currently provides a wide-range of park and recreational facilities and programs through its Recreation Department. Existing park facilities are listed in the table below. Most of the park sites are smaller neighborhood parks, some of which are shared facilities with school sites (see Table OCC-1).

Recreational activities and programs offered through the Recreation Department include art and dance classes, cooking classes, fitness programs, music classes, outdoor activities/camps, special interest classes, and youth and adult sports leagues and programs. Special programs are also provided with a focus

on teens, seniors, and theater. As the community continues to grow and change, new recreational activities and facilities will be needed. Therefore, the City should continue to pursue the purchase or lease of both existing and alternative park sites.

Bicycle Facilities: Bicycle facilities in Los Altos include bike paths, bike lanes, and bike routes. Bike paths are paved facilities designated for bicycle use that are physically separated from roadways by space or a physical barrier. Bike lanes are lanes on the outside edge of roadways reserved for the exclusive use of bicycles, designated with special signing and pavement markings. Bike routes are roadways recommended for bicycle use and often connect to bike lanes and bike paths. Designated with signs only, bike routes may not include additional pavement width.

**Table OCC-1
City Park Sites**

Park Site	Description
Connor Park	0.75-acre passive park
Covington Mini-Park	2.0-acre park with sports courts, play area, and picnic facilities
Grant Park	3.5-acre park with multi-purpose room, outdoor recreation and picnic area
Heritage Oaks Park	5.0-acre park with outdoor play and picnic areas
Hillview Park	6.0-acre community center and recreation facilities
Lincoln Park	Passive park – 0.7 acres of City land/1.8 acres of County land
Marymeade Park	2.5-acre park with tennis courts and outdoor recreation and picnic facilities
McKenzie Park	1.3-acre park with courts and outdoor recreation and picnic facilities
Monteclaire Park	0.75-acre park with tennis courts, picnic facilities, and preschool play area
Redwood Grove	6.0-acre nature preserve with trails/picnic areas
Rosita Park	5.0-acre park with baseball and soccer facilities
Shoup Park	2.84-acre park with outdoor recreation and picnic facilities with Garden House



COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN

Los Altos residents have a strong sense of community, safety, and pride in their educational system and community services. The Community Facilities and Services Plan establishes an approach to protect and preserve this quality of life. The Plan addresses the Community Facilities and Services issues identified in the previous section. The related goals and policies serve as the basis of the Plan and are supported by approaches to protect and enhance such facilities and services. The Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Implementation Program, located in Appendix A, is an extension of this plan and contains specific programs to achieve these service goals.

Law Enforcement and Fire Protection

Sufficient law enforcement and fire protection are necessary to ensure the public health and safety. Law enforcement services are provided by the Los Altos Police Department. The Police Department participates on the City's Emergency Preparedness Committee and the Traffic Advisory Task Force.

The City contracts with the Santa Clara County Fire Department for fire protection services within the City boundaries. The Los Altos Fire Stations are located at 10 Almond Avenue and 765 Fremont Avenue. Services provided by the Fire Department include fire prevention, emergency medical services, hazardous materials, and fire investigations.

As identified in the City's 1997 Community Compass report, safety in the downtown, in neighborhoods, and for families are the top three highest ranked community characteristics in Los Altos. Ensuring public safety in terms of law enforcement and fire protection requires maintaining adequate staffing, equipment, and facilities. The City will regu-

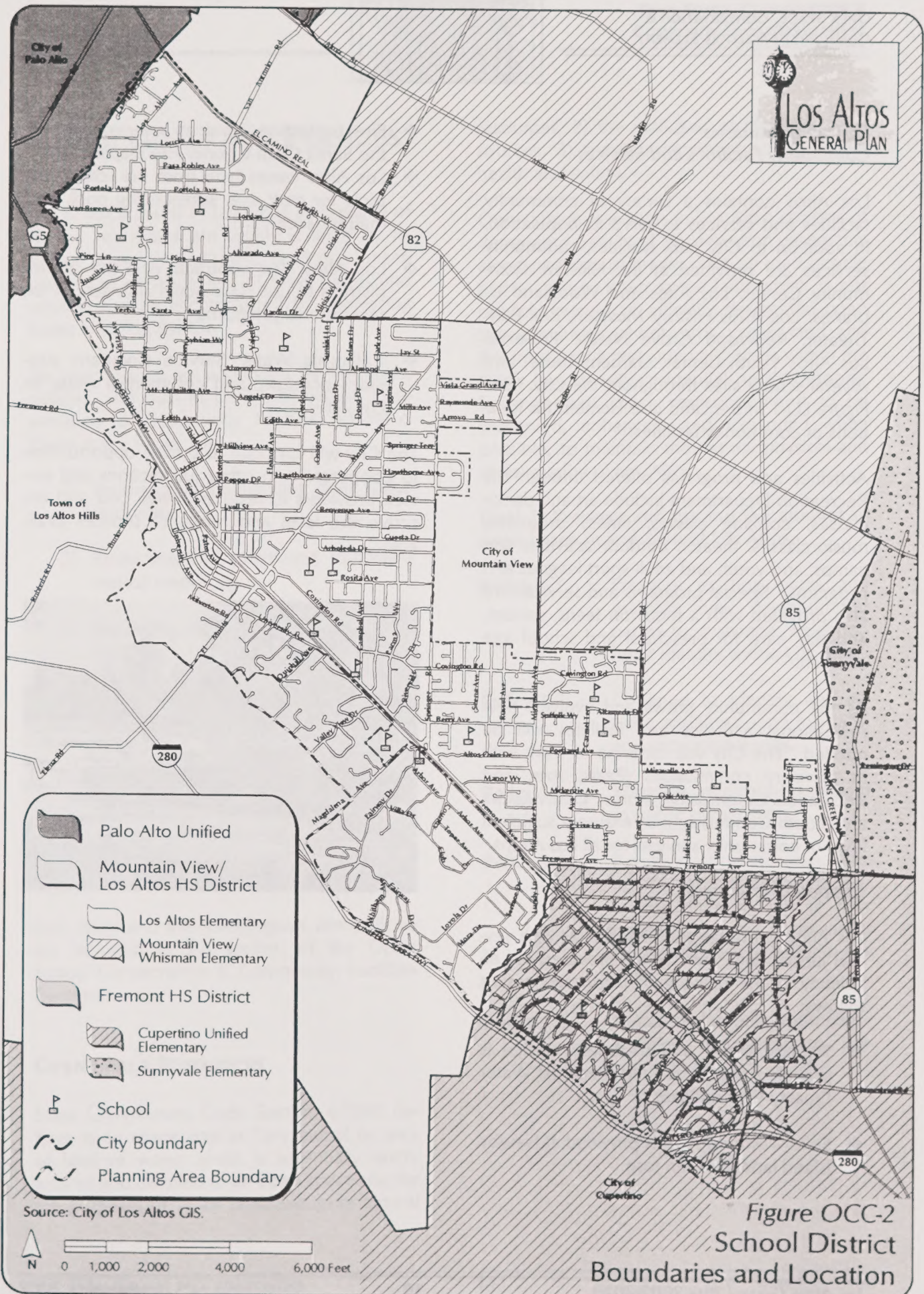
larly evaluate its law enforcement services and will work with Santa Clara County Fire Department to ensure that the level of service provided by each corresponds to the number of residents and businesses within the City, as well as current crime statistics and fire hazards.

Public Education

Los Altos is served by the five individual school districts listed below.

- ❖ Los Altos Elementary School District
- ❖ Cupertino Union Elementary School District
- ❖ Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District
- ❖ Fremont Union High School District
- ❖ Foothill-DeAnza Community College District

There is also a Los Altos Campus of Golden Gate University and several private schools serving Los Altos residents. Figure OCC-2 shows the location of school districts and schools within the Los Altos planning area. The school districts serving Los Altos are recognized for their excellence in education and student test performance throughout the state and nation. Unlike many schools throughout California, school capacity at these facilities has not been identified as a problem. The City will continue to work with school districts and local schools to ensure a high quality education for Los Altos children. The City will also review development proposals to ensure that the proposals are consistent and that school facility impact fees are paid.





District Boundaries

Community Facilities and Services

Los Altos contains a variety of community facilities and services to serve its population. In addition to City park facilities, community services are provided at the Hillview Community Center, Los Altos and Woodland Libraries, Los Altos History Museum, Bus Barn Theater, Redwood Grove Nature Preserve, Los Altos Youth Center, Garden House, and several school sites throughout the City. See Figure LU-1 in the Land Use Element for locations of community facilities.

Activities and programs offered through the Recreation Department include art and dance classes, cooking classes, fitness programs, music classes, theater, outdoor activities and camps, and youth and adult sport leagues and programs. Special programs and services are also provided with a focus on teens, seniors, and day care for preschool and school age children.

As the community grows and evolves, new recreational activities and facilities will be needed. The City will continue to work with its advisory commissions (Parks, Arts, and Recreation Commission, Library Commission, and Youth Commission) to ensure a sufficient level of community services for all Los Altos.

Cooperative Services

Los Altos contracts and coordinates with several jurisdictions and service providers for efficiency in the delivery of urban services as follows:

- ❖ Sanitary sewer and treatment service is provided at the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant
- ❖ Solid waste disposal is provided at Newby Island landfill in San Jose

- ❖ Fire protection services are provided by the Santa Clara County Fire Department
- ❖ Los Altos leases land from the school districts for park use, surrounding pool, and maintenance yard
- ❖ Los Altos also contracts with the school districts to use classrooms after school for recreational programs
- ❖ California Water Service Company provides domestic and commercial water to Los Altos

The City will continue to pursue opportunities to cooperate with other jurisdictions and service providers to reduce overall cost and improve the level and range of services available.





ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

The physical assets of Los Altos and quality of life for Los Altans are largely defined by its natural resources and public services. Preservation and enhancement of these assets and services can be accomplished by addressing issues affecting the City.

Six major issues are addressed by the goals, policies, and plan in the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element. These major issues are:

- 1) Preserving and enhancing open space resources;
- 2) Protecting and preserving important natural resources;
- 3) Expanding recreational programs and facilities;
- 4) Ensuring adequate fire and police protection services;
- 5) Ensuring a high quality public education system;
- 6) Providing facilities and services to meet the community, civic, social, and cultural needs.

Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element.

OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

State Government Code Section 65560 defines open space land as "any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open space use for the purposes of 1) the preservation of natural

resources, 2) the managed production of resources, 3) outdoor recreation, or 4) public health and safety.

Open space resources in Los Altos consists of designated park land, conservation easements along portions of creeks, and off-road bicycle paths. Other open space land which is not publicly owned or officially designated open space includes school yards, vacant land, and the front and street side yard areas within the City's low density residential neighborhoods. Existing open space resources need to be preserved, enhanced, and expanded when possible, to maintain the natural physical and visual quality of Los Altos.

Goal 1: Preserve and expand the amount of open space in and around Los Altos.

Policy 1.1: Preserve existing parks and establish new neighborhood parks to enhance neighborhood identity within Los Altos.

Policy 1.2: Continue to identify and acquire additional land for parks and recreational uses.

Policy 1.3: Maintain dedicated parkland in public ownership.

Policy 1.4: Require park dedication, public open space, or require fees in lieu thereof, for all new subdivisions and multi-family residential development in Los Altos.

Policy 1.5: Retain and update appropriate building regulations to preserve community identity.



NATURAL RESOURCES

Despite being mostly urbanized, the Los Altos planning area includes natural resources that should be conserved. Natural resources in Los Altos include creek channels, mature groves of trees, and remaining orchards. Creeks provide water resources, visual open space corridors, and riparian habitat for a variety of species. Mature groves of trees are scattered throughout the City's residential neighborhoods, along creek corridors, and within the Redwood Grove Nature Preserve. While not naturally occurring, the remaining orchards provide open space resources and a historical connection for the community. These important resources need to be protected to preserve the quality of life in the community. Conservation efforts in Los Altos should focus on preserving the habitats and corridors around creeks and open space areas.

Goal 2: Preserve and protect and provide for public enjoyment of natural areas (natural creek channels, topography, and vegetation), which are valuable natural resources.

- Policy 2.1:** Encourage development of a regional open space policy.
- Policy 2.2:** Identify and encourage preservation of existing orchard remnants as a reminder of its agricultural heritage.
- Policy 2.3:** Protect creeks, creekside areas and riparian habitat in their natural state while ensuring public safety and preserving a valuable natural resource.
- Policy 2.4:** Take an active role in promoting the adoption of a regional stream management plan.

- Policy 2.5:** Enforce local, state, and federal regulations addressing water quality and stormwater quality management.
- Policy 2.6:** Adopt land use controls that prevent incompatible uses for parcels adjacent to existing open space lands and recreation areas.
- Policy 2.7:** Establish buffers from adjoining land uses to protect the natural state of all creekside areas.
- Policy 2.8:** Encourage access and improvements along the creeks on public property.

PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Los Altos' existing park and recreation facilities include several small neighborhood parks, a nature preserve, a community center, and several shared facilities at existing elementary school sites. Dedicated park land in the City is limited. The City should pursue options to lease or purchase existing and alternative park sites.

The City's Recreation Department offers a wide-range of recreational programs and classes, including special programs for children, teens, and seniors. As the community continues to grow and evolve, programs should address the changing recreational needs of its residents.

Goal 3: Expand recreation programs and facilities for all ages using City and non-City sites.

- Policy 3.1:** Encourage development of a comprehensive Recreation Plan for existing and future park facilities and recreation services.
- Policy 3.2:** Continue to seek cooperative use of school facilities for recreation programs.
- Policy 3.3:** Provide and expand continuing support for children and teen facilities and programs.
- Policy 3.4:** Promote and provide programs and recreation facilities for seniors.
- Policy 3.5:** Ensure the availability of community pool facilities.

Goal 4: Ensure proper maintenance of parks, open space, and public facilities.

- Policy 4.1:** Provide adequate level of maintenance for City parks, open space, and public property to ensure safety, aesthetics, and recreational enjoyment for Los Altos residents.
- Policy 4.2:** Provide opportunity to create assessment districts for unique or maintenance needs.

A safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle system offers residents recreational and commute alternatives to vehicular travel. Providing connections with major destination points within and outside the community also creates an environment that encourages people to explore the community. Therefore, the City should continue to expand bike paths, lanes, and routes throughout the community.

Goal 5: Develop and promote a pathway system within the City which also connects to open space in surrounding areas.

- Policy 5.1:** Keep all pathways visible, safe, and appropriately maintained.
- Policy 5.2:** Promote residential area pathways throughout the City.
- Policy 5.3:** Encourage regional pathway systems.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities, such as police and fire protection, schools, libraries, and cultural and social facilities are provided by a range of public and private agencies and individuals. The City works with these various providers to ensure that adequate levels of community facilities and services are available for the residents and businesses of Los Altos. Private businesses and individuals are also important providers of services such as childcare and local cultural activities. As the community continues to develop and age, it is important to ensure that adequate levels of community facilities and services are maintained and improved.

Goal 6: Ensure an adequate level of fire protection and police protection within Los Altos.

- Policy 6.1:** Promote community order by preventing criminal activity, enforcing laws, and meeting community service demands.
- Policy 6.2:** Provide community-oriented policing services that are responsive to citizen needs.
- Policy 6.3:** Provide response times for police and fire protection services emergencies that are



comparable to similar jurisdictions in Santa Clara County.

Policy 6.4: Continue cooperative mutual aid agreements with nearby jurisdictions to ensure rapid and sufficient response to emergency situations.

Policy 6.5: Prevent or mitigate hazardous situations.

Goal 7: Work with local school districts and other educational organizations to ensure a high quality public education system.

Policy 7.1: Continue to work with the Los Altos and Cupertino Union Elementary School Districts, Mountain View-Los Altos Union and Fremont Union High School Districts, and Foothill and De Anza Community College to provide a high quality educational system to residents.

Goal 8: Ensure a high level of library service.

Policy 8.1: Continue to support the cultural enrichment provided by the Los Altos libraries through access to informational, educational, and recreational materials and services.

Policy 8.2: Promote local libraries, through planning and programming, as an integral part of the community, and in particular, the main library as an element of the Civic Center complex.

Goal 9: Encourage the provision of cultural facilities and activities within the City.

Policy 9.1: Continue to support the activities of the Los Altos History Museum, the Hillview Community Center, and the Redwood Grove Nature Preserve.

Policy 9.2: Work with private developers to offer cultural activities within the community, such as a community theater and cinema.

Goal 10: Ensure that resources are available to serve the City's dependent residents, including but not limited to children, disabled, seniors, homeless, victims of crime/abuse, and drug/alcohol abusers.

Policy 10.1: Cooperate with other organizations and providers to promote and optimize resources for dependent residents.

Policy 10.2: Adopt land use controls for second units, zoning, and day care that encourage dependent care services.

Policy 10.3: Encourage the use of open school sites for childcare and student care, including before-school, after-school, and year-round child care.

COOPERATIVE SERVICES

A variety of service providers and jurisdictions offer a range of services to Los Altos. By coordinating with these service providers, the City is able to reduce overall cost and improve the level and range of services available.

Given the similarities and proximity of surrounding jurisdictions, the potential exists to gain efficiencies in the delivery of urban services through economies of scale. Los Altos

contracts with neighboring cities for sanitary sewer collection and treatment, solid waste disposal, and fire services. Los Altos also leases school district land for park use.

Goal 11: Maximize opportunities for joint public and private utilization of City, private sector, private school land and facilities, and public school district land, facilities, programs and resources to provide the most cost efficient and effective services for present and future Los Altos residents.

Policy 11.1: Cooperate with other governments, districts, and the private sector through: (1) joint agreements between the City and public school districts and private schools to share facilities, personnel, programs, and future land purchase opportunities; (2) continued exchange, sharing, and evaluation of joint services with school districts; (3) working with public and private schools to provide recreation facilities and programs on school land; and (4) optimizing leisure activities related to recreation, culture, and arts.

Policy 11.2: Adopt land use controls that encourage the delivery of human services where appropriate.

Policy 11.3: Work with other agencies where appropriate as a possible means to reduce the cost of operation and providing services.

Policy 11.4: Encourage private sector provision of facilities and/or services.

Policy 11.5: Encourage the school districts to develop and retain open space facilities.

Policy 11.6: Plan for the integration of current and future Civic Center functions and facilities with pathways, traffic patterns, roads, landscaping, lighting, parking, and design.





IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

The Implementation Programs Appendix provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and plans for City elected officials, staff and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Programs are to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a measure, procedure, or technique that requires additional City action. This action may either occur on a City-wide basis or in specific areas within the City. The City Council, by relating the Implementation Programs to the General Plan, recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

USE OF THE GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Implementation Programs are intended for use in preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the California Government Code. Because some of the individual actions and programs described in the Implementation Programs Appendix act as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by Section 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This Implementation Programs Appendix may be updated annually with the

budget process and whenever the City's General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness.



OPEN SPACE, CONSERVATION & COMMUNITY FACILITIES

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element. The Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Element.

OPEN SPACE RESOURCES

OCC 1: PRESERVE EXISTING OPEN SPACE

Preserve the City's existing open space land in perpetuity.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Recreation
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1

OCC 2: PURSUE ADDITIONAL OPEN SPACE OPPORTUNITIES

Pursue opportunities for additional open space land in the form of parkland dedication, and public open space easements, leaseholds, land donations/dedications, and gift annuities.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Recreation
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.2, 1.4

NATURAL RESOURCES

OCC 3: PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES

Assess development proposals for potential impacts to significant natural resources pursuant to California Environmental Quality Act. Require appropriate mitigation for all significant impacts if impact avoidance is not possible.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	Development fees, mitigation
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.2, 2.3, 2.7



OCC 4: WATERCOURSE PROTECTION ORDINANCE

Implement the City's Watercourse Protection Ordinance.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development/Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees, mitigation
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.3, 2.5, 2.7

OCC 5: IMPROVE SURFACE WATER QUALITY

To reduce pollutants in urban runoff, require new development projects and substantial rehabilitation projects to incorporate Best Management Practices pursuant to the National Pollutant System Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES), the Santa Clara County Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program and the Santa Clara County Drainage Master Plan to ensure that the City complies with applicable State and federal regulations.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, State and Federal funding sources, development fees, mitigation
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7

PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

OCC 6: RECREATION PLAN

Develop and periodically update a Recreation Plan, which addresses existing and future facilities and services. In implementing and updating the plan, focus on retrofitting and improving the existing facilities and constructing new facilities in the most cost-effective manner. Improvements and new construction will implement requirements of the ADA. Specific actions are listed below:

- 1) Develop a financial plan for the purchase and development of parkland;
- 2) Identify potential sites for acquisition and construction of recreation facilities to meet the recreational needs of the City;
- 3) Involve the City's Parks, Arts, and Recreation Commission in the development and update of the Recreation Plan;
- 4) Develop park sites consistent with the Recreation Plan;
- 5) Develop local bicycle, riding, and pedestrian trail systems consistent with the City's current Bicycle Transportation Plan and coordinate improvements to the regional trails system with the County;
- 6) Encourage use of community parks and facilities for cultural activities, special events and programs;



- 7) Adopt and maintain a capital improvement program for parkland acquisitions, improvements, existing park retrofits and recreational facilities, and a phasing schedule for commitment of resources including the design and construction of facilities; and
- 8) Prepare and update an assessment of the open space and recreational opportunities offered by various unused open space lands, privately operated facilities and leased open space lands.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Recreation, Public Works, City Manager, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, State and Federal Funds, development fees
Time Frame:	2002/2003 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.2, 1.4, 2.8, 3.1, 3.2, 3.4, 5.2, 5.3

OCC 7: CONTINUE TO REQUIRE PARKLAND DEDICATION

As new development projects are proposed in Los Altos, continue to require dedication of parkland, a fee in lieu thereof, or a combination of both, as a condition of new development pursuant to the Quimby Act and the Parkland Dedication Ordinance.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works, Recreation
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.4

OCC 8: RECREATION PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

Provide a full range of recreational opportunities to serve the community by:

- 1) Promoting a high level of public outreach by coordinating with community organizations, special interest groups and private businesses to provide recreation program opportunities, and distributing newsletters or brochures to inform the community of available recreation programs and facilities;
- 2) Coordinating with other agencies/organizations such as the school districts, Parks, Art, and Recreation Commission, Youth Commission, and other appropriate agencies to achieve maximum utilization of recreation programs and facilities in the community;
- 3) Facilitating cooperative recreational programming with surrounding jurisdictions to expand opportunities and cost efficiencies;
- 4) Identifying and evaluating the provision of drop-in, team sports, and other after-school recreation programs for youth;
- 5) Involving the Youth Commission in recreational programming for youth and teen center activities;
- 6) Continuing work with the Hillview Senior Center and Garden House to identify the available programs and facilities for seniors, and looking for ways to augment them where appropriate;



- 7) Exploring means to provide programs to those who cannot afford to pay by utilizing corporate sponsorships, volunteers and joint use of school facilities and services; and
- 8) Developing new recreation programs to reflect the changing needs and interests of Los Altos residents.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Recreation, School Districts
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5

OCC 9: PARK MAINTENANCE

Properly maintain and operate the grounds and facilities of existing parks to minimize vandalism and crime, affirm safe and pleasant environments, and maximize public use and enjoyment. Enhance the safety and maintenance of existing and future parks by:

- 1) Updating (as needed) operational maintenance standards to provide quality maintenance of parks and recreation facilities;
- 2) Reporting regularly on the City's maintenance efforts and costs, as well as maintenance goals; and
- 3) Exploring the use of Assessment Districts (e.g., special benefit districts, maintenance districts, community facilities districts) for the upkeep and/or upgrade of public and private property and facilities.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Recreation
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees, property owners
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

OCC 10: PROMOTE FIRE PREVENTION

Promote fire prevention in Los Altos in the following ways:

- 1) Continue to provide fire protection services;
- 2) Implement fire hazard education and fire prevention programs, including fuel modification programs;
- 3) Coordinate with the local water districts to ensure that water pressure for urban areas and sites to be developed is adequate for fire fighting purposes.
- 4) Adopt and implement the Uniform Fire Code provisions and appropriate amendments to reflect the unique Los Altos topography, climate, vegetation and urban form.



Responsible Agency/Department: Fire
Funding Source: General Fund, development fees, property owners
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 6.3, 6.4, 6.5

OCC 11: MINIMIZE CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

Protect residents and businesses from criminal activity by providing substantive levels of police protection, educating the public about methods to reduce criminal activity and continuing the graffiti removal program. The specific actions to implement these goals are identified below:

- 1) Annual review of Police Department budget to ensure that a sufficient emphasis is placed on staffing and programs for crime prevention;
- 2) Coordinate with all Santa Clara County public agencies to increase public awareness about criminal activity and crime prevention activities. Maximize the use of Neighborhood Watch programs in both residential and business communities;
- 3) Continue to develop crime prevention programs for youth, older adult, neighborhood, and business groups;

Responsible Agency/Department: Police Department
Funding Source: General Fund, development fees, property owners
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4

OCC 12: ADEQUATE LEVEL OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Ensure the quality of life Los Altos residents have grown to expect using the following methods:

- 1) Continue to work with the school districts and other educational organizations to ensure a high quality public education system;
- 2) Continue to support a high level of library service; and
- 3) Continue to encourage and promote the provision of cultural facilities and activities.

Responsible Agency/Department: City Manager, Recreation
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2, 11.3, 11.6

CIRCULATION ELEMENT



CIRCULATION ELEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Circulation Element	1
Scope and Content of the Circulation Element	2
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	2
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	4

CIRCULATION PLAN

Regional Transportation Facilities	5
City Roadways	7
Transit	13
Parking	17
Truck Traffic	19

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Regional Transportation Facilities	20
Local Circulation System	20
Transit	22
Bicyclists and Pedestrians	23
Parking and Truck Traffic	24

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

**LIST OF TABLES**

C-1	Signalized Intersection LOS Definitions Using Average Stopped Vehicle Delay	10
C-2	Unsignalized Intersection LOS Using Total Average Delay	10

LIST OF FIGURES

C-1	Circulation Plan	11
C-2	Congested Intersections	12
C-3	Transit Routes	14
C-4	Bikeways	16
C-5	Sidewalks and Paths on Major Roadways	18

CIRCULATION ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

Los Altos is currently served by a well-established circulation system. The City is located immediately adjacent to the regional facilities of Interstate 280 and SR 85 and is served by two subregional facilities: Foothill Expressway and El Camino Real (State Route 82). The City contains approximately 107 miles of public streets.

Access to U. S. Highway 101 to the north is provided through the City of Mountain View. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are concentrated on the major streets with some off-street paths to provide intra-City travel. Most local streets do not include sidewalks. Established bus transit service also provides travel opportunities for community residents and employees and provides links to Caltrain passenger rail and VTA light rail service. The closest major airport is located in San Jose approximately eight miles to the east.

The Circulation Element guides continued development of the circulation system to support planned growth. The anticipated development pattern, as identified in the Land Use Element, will increase the demand for local and regional roadways. However, "cut-through" traffic generated by regional growth is expected to have the greatest effect on circulation. This element establishes the circulation plan components and identifies improvements required to maintain service levels. The use of a variety of transportation modes such as transit, walking, and bicycling is promoted to reduce the demand for transportation system improvements and improve air quality. Neighborhood traffic management techniques are used to reduce or manage traffic volumes and speeds.

PURPOSE OF THE CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The purpose of the Circulation Element is to provide a safe, efficient and adequate circulation system for the City. State planning law requires that the Circulation Element consists of the general location for proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other local public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the land use element plan. To meet this purpose, the Circulation Element addresses the circulation improvements needed to provide adequate capacity for future land uses. The Element establishes a hierarchy of transportation routes with a typical functional description for each roadway category.

California General Plan Guidelines recommend that the circulation policies and plans should:

- ❖ Coordinate the transportation and circulation system with planned land uses;
- ❖ Promote the efficient transport of goods and the safe and effective movement of all segments of the population;
- ❖ Make efficient use of existing transportation facilities; and
- ❖ Protect environmental quality and promote the wise and equitable use of economic and natural resources.

The Guidelines indicate that the Circulation Element should address all facets of circulation including streets and highways, transportation corridors, public transit, railroads, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and commercial, general and military airports. The Los Altos Circulation Element fulfills State requirements with a strategy to provide effective circulation



facilities supporting desired community development. Los Altos has the additional goal of protecting the quiet and safe character of its neighborhood streetscape.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE CIRCULATION ELEMENT

The Circulation Element contains goals and policies to improve overall circulation in Los Altos. For vehicle transportation, a hierarchical roadway network is established with designated roadway types and functional descriptions. The roadway type is linked to anticipated traffic levels. Because local circulation is inextricably linked with the regional transportation demand, the Element focuses on active participation in the development and implementation of regional policies and programs to alleviate traffic congestion. Non-automobile transportation modes are also emphasized in this Element to reduce dependency on the automobile and thereby improve the environment and the quality of life.

The Circulation Element is comprised of four sections: 1) Introduction; 2) the Circulation Plan; 3) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs Appendix. The Circulation Plan provides background information and explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues pertaining to the transportation system are identified, and related goals and policies are established. The goals are overall statements of the City desires and are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for planning circulation improvements to accommodate anticipated population growth, maintaining acceptable levels of transportation service while development occurs, promoting alternative transportation modes, and coordinating with local and regional jurisdictions to provide regional transportation facilities. Specific im-

plementation programs for circulation are contained in Implementation Program Appendix.

RELATED LAWS, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

Several transportation plans prepared by the state, County and regional agencies focus on the regional transportation system. Strategies to handle anticipated traffic levels from future development are discussed. Other plans have also been prepared to locate future routes for public transit including rail service. Plans and programs related to the Circulation Element include the following:

Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD)

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) is a regulatory body responsible for improving air quality in the Bay Area. The Bay Area 1991 Clean Air Plan (CAP) is required by the 1988 California Clean Air Act. Prepared by BAAQMD in cooperation with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), its main objective is to attain state air quality standards for ozone and carbon monoxide. The plan includes a specific measure which urges cities and counties to formulate and adopt local air quality elements, or the equivalent, in their General Plan.

Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) is a long-range planning document that proposes a detailed set of investments and strategies to maintain, manage and improve the surface transportation network in the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area. The plan promotes projects that: a) provide reasonable and predictable mobility within the region; b) ensure that



all people have equitable access to transportation; c) support a healthy environment and mitigate any adverse impacts; and d) promote economic vitality within the region. A primary goal of the RTP is to illustrate how the improvements will help attain regional air quality objectives.

Santa Clara County Congestion Management Plan (CMP)

With the passage of the gas tax increase (Proposition 111) in June 1990, each county in the state was required to prepare a Congestion Management Plan (CMP). The main goals of the CMP are to establish a political process through which countywide roadway congestion can be controlled or relieved, and to develop a comprehensive strategy to respond to countywide transportation needs. The CMP is updated biennially to reflect changing transportation needs and conditions within the county. The CMP capital improvement program must be submitted to MTC every two years to be incorporated into the Bay Area Regional Transportation Improvement Plan. The Valley Transportation Authority, the regional planning agency for Santa Clara County, administers the CMP.

Valley Transportation Plan 2020

Beginning in January 1999, VTA began developing the long-range transportation plan called Valley Transportation Plan 2020 (VTP 2020). The purpose of VTP 2020 is to:

- ❖ Improve the relationship between land use and transportation decisions;
- ❖ Effectively distribute transportation resources and plans their future use, and effectively upgrades the existing State and local roadway system;
- ❖ Expand the rail and bus transit system, using new technologies for the bus fleet;
- ❖ Implement new technologies in operating and managing transportation systems; and,
- ❖ Respond to heightened awareness of the link between transportation and open space preservation, air quality, urban design and other environmental issues.

Adopted in December 2000, VTP 2020 provides a framework for making key transportation decisions, a plan for investing in our transportation system, and strategic direction for VTA's involvement in land use and other livability issues. The projects in this document are incorporated into the RTP prepared by MTC. Over the past year, efforts have focused on updating the expenditure plan, and development of new land use and partnership efforts.

Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Division

The Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Division is in the process of preparing a comprehensive study of all of the County expressway facilities including Foothill Expressway. Previous studies of Foothill Expressway over the last 20 years have called for the addition of HOV lanes from Loyola Drive north, and at-grade improvements at Homestead Avenue, Grant Avenue, Springer Road-Magdalena Avenue, and El Monte Avenue. The new County study will examine the engineering and design feasibility of these and other improvements within the corridor. Results of this study regarding Foothill Expressway are not expected until late 2002 or early 2003.

Los Altos Bicycle Transportation Plan

The City prepared a 2002 Bicycle Transportation Plan recommending a variety of improvements to complete and enhance bicycle and multi-use bicycle pedestrian paths.

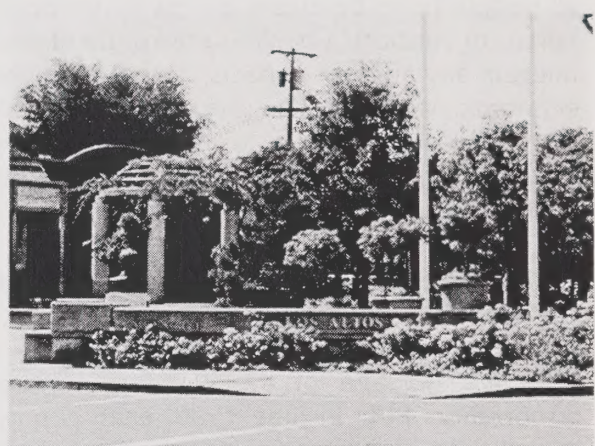


RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

According to state planning law, the Circulation Element must be independent, but consistent with the other General Plan Elements. All elements of the General Plan are interrelated to a degree, and certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are the primary subjects of other elements. The integration of overlapping issues throughout the General Plan elements provides a strong basis for implementation of plans and programs, and achievement of community goals. The Circulation Element relates most closely to the Land Use, Conservation and Open Space, Noise, and Public Safety Elements.

The Land Use and Circulation Elements are inextricably linked. The planned development identified in the Land Use Element is the basis for determining future road improvements. The circulation policies and plans ensure that existing transportation facilities will be improved and new facilities will be constructed to adequately serve traffic generated by planned development. An efficient circulation system is a critical factor for diversifying and expanding local economic activities. In addition, the Circulation Element promotes alternative transportation modes to minimize the regional impacts of planned local development.

The Circulation Element provides for a bike-way and pedestrians system that accommodates bicycles and pedestrians. Bikeways will connect with recreational areas and support the City recreational goals identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element. In addition to promoting bicycle and pedestrian transportation, the Circulation Element promotes the use of public transit.





CIRCULATION PLAN

Los Altos is supported by a diverse circulation system including vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian links. The local system interconnects with the larger regional system and the operation of the two systems is interdependent. The Circulation Plan summarizes the approach to ensure safe and convenient operation of the circulation system, and identifies improvements required to accommodate traffic from planned development and regional diversion.

Due to the City's lower density development, vehicular transportation remains the primary travel mode. To that end, a Roadway Plan is established with hierarchical designations. The use of non-automobile transportation modes is promoted to reduce the vehicle congestion and improve overall livability.

The Plan is based on goals and policies identified in the final section of this Element. The Circulation Element Implementation Programs Appendix is an extension of the Circulation Plan and contains specific programs to coordinate planned development and regional through traffic.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The rapid growth in the San Francisco Bay Area over the last 20 years has resulted in an overwhelming demand on the region's transportation system. Congestion on the freeways surrounding and adjacent to Los Altos has caused some regional traffic to divert to local City streets. The success of development within the City is dependent on the effectiveness of the regional system to accommodate demand through all modes. The system must link localities with major activity centers and regional transportation hubs. In

addition, the regional circulation system must meet the needs of local residents.

Los Altos is closely tied to the regional circulation system. Regional roadway access to Los Altos is provided by three major freeways: State Route (SR) 85, SR 101, and Interstate 280 (I-280). Only I-280 provides direct access within Los Altos via an interchange at Foothill Expressway. Connections to I-280 are also provided via interchanges at El Monte Avenue and Magdalena Avenue. Access to SR 85 is provided by the I-280 interchange, Homestead Road, Fremont Avenue, and El Camino Real (SR 82). SR 85 is often congested northbound in the morning peak period and southbound in the evening peak period. Traffic moving between I-280 and points to the north will sometimes divert to City streets to avoid the congestion on SR 85. Foothill Expressway and El Camino Real also serve regional traffic and link Los Altos to nearby cities to the north and south.

Regional Travel Forecasts

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) prepared its Valley Transportation Plan (VTP) 2020 to identify the improvements needed to serve regional travel demand for the next 20 years. The report contains the following key findings, which are important considerations for Los Altos:

- ❖ The County's population is expected to increase by 15 percent over the next 20 years, while the job growth is expected to exceed 20 percent. With the addition of significantly more jobs than residents, growth in net commuting from surrounding counties will increase over the next decade and then level off.
- ❖ Approximately 41 percent of the job growth will occur in the northern part of the County in Palo Alto, Mountain View, Sunnyvale, Cupertino, Santa Clara, North San Jose, and Milpitas. Commute travel



to the jobs in the northwesternmost cities will impact travel through Los Altos.

- ❖ A four percent increase in freeway capacity will not be able to accommodate the projected demand. More than 20 percent of the morning peak trips in 2020 will not be able to travel during the peak hour due to congestion. Thus, congestion will further spread outside the traditional peak travel periods.
- ❖ The amount of vehicle miles of travel on arterial roadways is expected to increase from 26 percent in 2000 to 30 percent in 2020. At the same time, the investment in the transportation system will focus on system management instead of system expansion (i.e., managing traffic flow instead of widening roads).
- ❖ The proposed improvement plan is a multi-modal approach designed to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and to develop viable options to single-occupant vehicle travel including transit, bicycling and walking. The implementation of Best Development Practices to create and maintain livable and sustainable communities is another primary goal of the regional planning effort.

The results of this report indicate that Los Altos will continue to experience peak period congestion as commuters in automobiles search for alternative routes to regional freeways and expressways. Although improvements will increase throughput in some cases, diversion to City streets will still occur and is expected to worsen.

The VTA is the Congestion Management Agency (CMA) for jurisdictions within the County and sets the State and Federal funding priorities for improvements affecting Congestion Management Program (CMP) facilities.

CMP facilities in Los Altos include SR 82, Foothill Expressway, SR 85, and I-280. The following local streets include at-grade intersections on Foothill Expressway and are included in the Santa Clara County Congestion Management Program (CMP): Main Street, San Antonio Road, El Monte Avenue, Springer Road-Magdalena Avenue, Grant Road-St. Joseph Avenue, and Vineyard Drive-Homestead Road. The Arboretum Drive-Fremont Avenue intersection on Foothill Expressway is not a CMP location.

CMP-designated intersections have regional significance and are monitored annually by the Valley Transportation Authority, the congestion management agency for Santa Clara County. In addition to annual monitoring, VTA staff reviews transportation impact analysis reports from local agencies to evaluate the potential transportation impacts of local land use decisions. The LOS standard for CMP intersections is LOS E.

Transportation Demand Management Programs

Many communities in the County now require aggressive Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs. These programs include various facilities and services designed to reduce the amount of peak period traffic by encouraging employees to use modes other than the single-occupant automobile for transportation to and from the workplace and to travel during non-peak times. Typical TDM components include:

- ❖ TDM coordinator
- ❖ Carpool/vanpool match program and preferential parking for carpools/vanpools
- ❖ Secure bicycle storage facilities
- ❖ On-site shower facilities



- ❖ Flex-time (i.e., staggered hours that begin and/or end outside the peak commute hours)
- ❖ Provisions for telecommuting
- ❖ Shuttle bus service
- ❖ Guaranteed ride home program
- ❖ Cash incentives/Transit subsidies/On-site transit pass sales
- ❖ Education programs

The City does not have adopted policies or implementation programs regarding specific TDM measures. Recent court decisions have restricted the methods by which jurisdictions can require TDM measures for developments. Typically, TDM measures are included as part of a project through the development agreement process for new projects or through approval of use permit modifications for existing developments. The City will continue to support application of TDM measures for regional and local developments.

CITY ROADWAYS

Since more than 94 percent of peak period travel is completed using automobiles, the City roadway system is the most important component of the City's overall circulation system and is defined using a hierarchical classification system for major streets. The Circulation Element roadway categories are differentiated by size, function and capacity.

Roadway Categories

The Element includes six categories in the hierarchy, ranging from freeways with the highest capacity, to a two-lane undivided roadway with the lowest capacity. Only the facilities designated as arterial, collector, local collec-

tor, and local street are under the jurisdiction of the City. Caltrans maintains and has jurisdiction over all freeways and state routes, while the Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Division controls all intersections along Foothill Expressway. The roadway categories are summarized as follows:

Freeways. Freeways are limited-access, high-speed travelways included in the state and federal highway systems. Their purpose is to carry regional through traffic. Access is provided by interchanges with typical spacing of one-mile or greater. No local access is provided to adjacent land uses. The only freeway with an access point in the City is I-280.

Expressways. Expressways are high-speed, limited-access streets designed to facilitate the movement of high traffic volumes. Expressways are designed to serve both regional through and local traffic, and ideally connect other regional roadways and freeways. The only expressway facility within the City limits is Foothill Expressway.

Arterials. Arterial roadways are major streets that primarily serve through traffic and provide access to abutting properties as a secondary function. Arterials are generally designed with two to six travel lanes and major intersections are signalized. This roadway type is divided into two categories: major and minor arterials. Major arterials are typically four- or more lane roadways and serve both local and through traffic. Minor arterials are typically two- to four-lane streets and serve local and commute traffic (e.g., major arterial is El Camino Real). Minor arterials include San Antonio Road and El Monte Avenue (between I-280 and Foothill Expressway). Other facilities such as Grant Road and El Monte Avenue, between Springer Road and Foothill Expressway are currently designated as collector streets, but function as minor arterials in terms of traffic volume and traffic composition. That is, they carry a substantial amount of regional or non-local traffic.



Collectors. Collectors are streets that provide access and traffic circulation within residential and non-residential (e.g., commercial and industrial) areas. They connect local streets to arterials and are typically designed with two travel lanes that may accommodate on-street parking. In some cases, they will provide access to abutting properties.

Local Collector. A local collector is a street that distributes traffic within a neighborhood or similar adjacent neighborhoods, but is not intended for use as a through street or link between higher capacity facilities such as collector or arterial roadways. Local collectors are fronted by residential uses and do not typically serve commercial uses.

Local Streets. Local streets provide direct access to abutting residential properties as their primary function. Local streets have no more than two travel lanes and may or may not accommodate on-street parking. In most areas of Los Altos, local streets do not include sidewalks.

The city does not maintain standard cross-sections for arterial roadways. Arterial roadways are designed on an as-needed basis. Any of the roadway classifications may deviate from typical standards where physical constraints exist or where preservation of community character dictates special treatment. Although specific roadway design may vary, the overriding objective is that all roadways carry the designed volume of traffic at a safe travel speed. The classification of streets has a bearing on the types of traffic calming measures that are considered appropriate for specific roadway segments.

Performance Criteria

The performance of the roadway system is determined by comparing its traffic carrying capacity with projected traffic volumes. The use of performance criteria relies upon a statement of City policy establishing a desired

level of service (LOS) within the community. Performance is measured based on intersection delay in accordance with City policies consistent with regional land use and planning guidelines maintained by the VTA. Delays are calculated based on existing and future traffic volumes and the capacity of the traffic control device (traffic signal or stop sign) at each location. A level of service scale is used to evaluate performance based on corresponding ranges of delay. The operations of roadways are described with the term level of service. Level of service (LOS) is a qualitative description of traffic operations ranging from Level A, or free flow operations with little or no delay, to Level F, or oversaturated conditions with excessive delays. LOS E represents conditions at capacity.

The level of service methodology for signalized intersections evaluates an intersection's operation based on the average stopped vehicular delay calculated using the method described in Chapter 9 of the 1985 Highway Capacity Manual with adjusted saturation flow rates to reflect local (Santa Clara County) conditions. The average stopped delay for all vehicles at signalized intersections is calculated using the TRAFFIX analysis software. This method is consistent with City guidelines and those published by the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), which monitors land use changes throughout the County. The ranges of stopped delay and the corresponding LOS for signalized intersections are presented in Table C-1.

Level of service calculations for stop sign-controlled intersections were conducted using the methodology for unsignalized intersections contained in the 2000 update to the Highway Capacity Manual. This method calculates the amount of control delay at an intersection, which includes initial deceleration delay, queue move-up time, stopped delay, and final acceleration delay.



Delay for two-way (stop signs on the minor street only) and four-way (all approaches stop) are calculated differently. The level of service rating for two-way stop controlled intersections is based on the average control delay for the longest-delayed approach controlled by a stop sign. The level of service is calculated for each movement, not for the intersection as a whole; since the traffic on the main or major street does not stop, including these volumes would skew the weighted vehicular delay. For minor street approaches composed of a single lane (shared approach), the control delay is computed as the average of all movements in that lane.

At four-way stop intersections, the delay used to identify the LOS is the average of all turning movements (including through movements) on all four approaches. The ranges of control delay and the corresponding LOS for unsignalized intersections are presented in Table C-2.

Various LOS policy standards have been established for evaluating observed traffic, future development plans and circulation system modifications. At the regional planning level, the Caltrans- and County-controlled facilities are monitored as part of the Congestion Management Program (CMP) and use a minimum LOS E operating standard. For the Los Altos General Plan, the performance criterion for evaluating operations at City-controlled intersections is LOS D.

Roadway segments operations can be analyzed based on generalized volume thresholds of 18,000, 36,000, and 54,000 vehicles per day (vpd) for two-, four-, and six-lane roadways, respectively. These planning-level thresholds are usually applied to arterial streets with intermittent driveways serving abutting properties and speed limits of 35 to 45 miles per hour. These thresholds are not the maximum volumes that can be accommodated by the roadway, but a planning "ca-

capacity" for purposes of identifying congested areas. Planning-level thresholds for local and collector streets can vary widely depending on the number of abutting properties/driveways and the overall character of the street.

Daily traffic volumes are typically used to identify the required number of travel lanes on roadway segments; however, intersections represent the constraint points of the roadway system. Thus, intersection peak-hour volumes are a better indicator of roadway operations, especially in Los Altos, where widening of roadway segments to accommodate existing and future volumes is limited by right-of-way and other physical constraints, in addition to City Council policies.

Roadway Plan

The plan accommodates anticipated traffic levels where possible and the hierarchical roadway classification system is implemented to avoid community impacts. The Circulation Plan delineates the planned roadway system (Figure C-1).

Monitoring the operation of City roadways will be conducted to determine if the City roadway system meets desirable performance criteria. Where the City determines that proposed development projects will cause LOS standards to be exceeded, appropriate mitigation will be considered. Locations that are currently congested or expected to be congested in the future are illustrated on Figure C-2.



Table C-1
Signalized Intersection Level of Service Definitions
Using Average Stopped Vehicular Delay

<i>Level of Service</i>	Average Stopped Delay Per Vehicle (Seconds)	<i>Description</i>
A	≤ 5.0	Operations with very low delay occurring with favorable progression and/or short cycle length.
B+	$5.0 < \text{delay} \leq 7.0$	Operations with low delay occurring with good progression and/or short cycle lengths.
B	$7.0 < \text{delay} \leq 13.0$	
B-	$13.0 < \text{delay} \leq 15.0$	
C+	$15.0 < \text{delay} \leq 17.0$	Operations with average delays resulting from fair progression and/or longer cycle lengths. Individual cycle failures begin to appear.
C	$17.0 < \text{delay} \leq 23.0$	
C-	$23.0 < \text{delay} \leq 25.0$	
D+	$25.0 < \text{delay} \leq 28.0$	Operations with longer delays due to a combination of unfavorable progression, long cycle lengths, and high V/C ratios. Many vehicles stop and individual cycle failures are noticeable.
D	$28.0 < \text{delay} \leq 37.0$	
D-	$37.0 < \text{delay} \leq 40.0$	
E+	$40.0 < \text{delay} \leq 44.0$	Operations with high delay values indicating poor progression, long cycle lengths, and high V/C ratios. Individual cycle failures are frequent occurrences.
E	$44.0 < \text{delay} \leq 56.0$	
E-	$56.0 < \text{delay} \leq 60.0$	
F	> 60.0	Operations with delays unacceptable to most drivers occurring due to over-saturation, poor progression, or very long cycle lengths.

Source: *Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines* (VTA Congestion Management Program Guidelines, May 7, 1998)

Table C-2
Unsignalized Intersection Level of Service Definitions
Using Total Average Delay

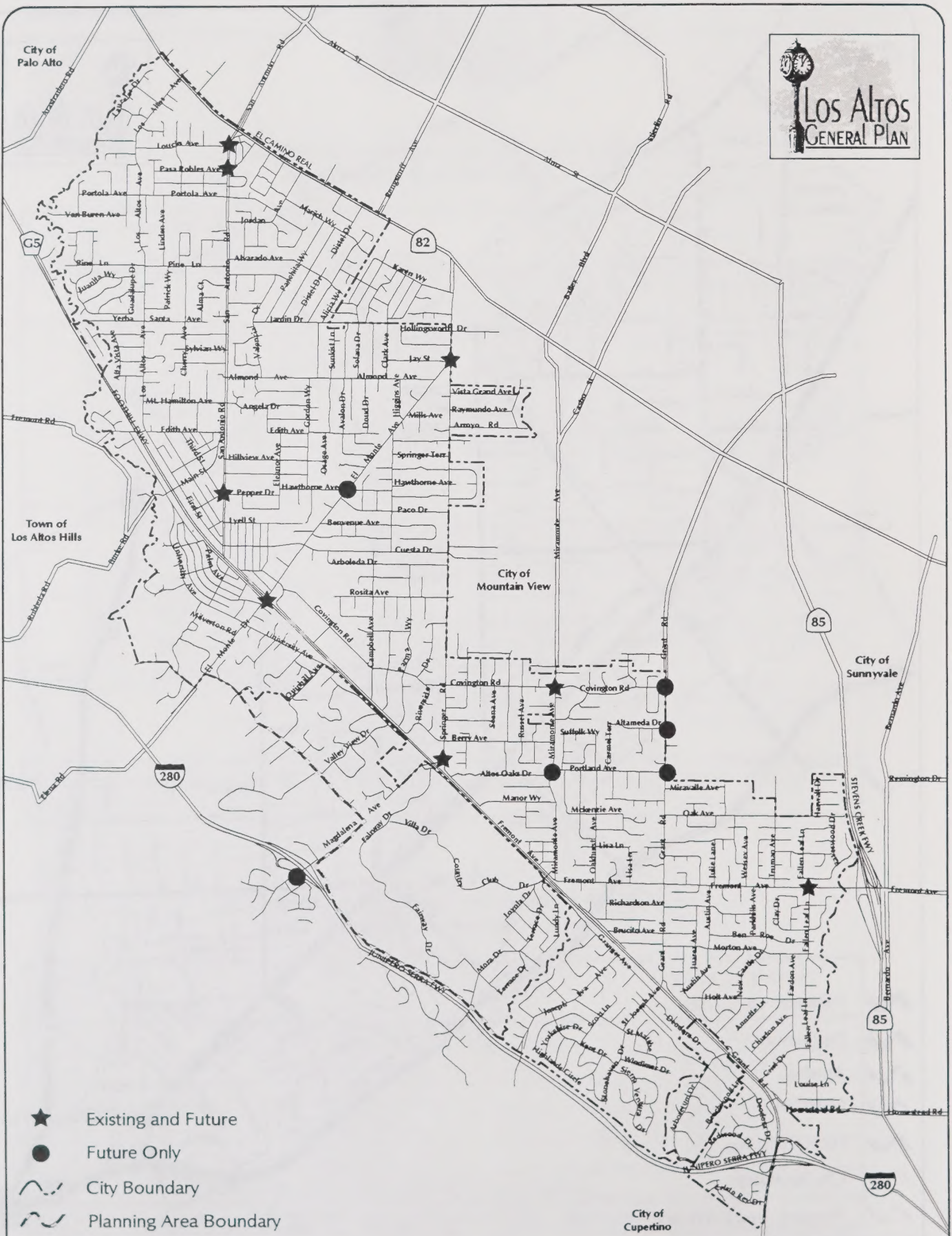
<i>Level of Service</i>	Description	Average Total Delay Per Vehicle (Seconds)
A	Little or no delays.	≤ 10.0
B	Short traffic delays.	10.1 to 15.0
C	Average traffic delays.	15.1 to 25.0
D	Long traffic delays.	25.1 to 35.0
E	Very long traffic delays	35.1 to 50.0
F	Extreme traffic delays with intersection capacity exceeded.	> 50.0

Source: Transportation Research Board *Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report, 1997.*



Figure C-1
Circulation Plan

City of
Palo Alto



- ★ Existing and Future
- Future Only
- City Boundary
- Planning Area Boundary

Source: Fehr & Peers Associates, Inc.

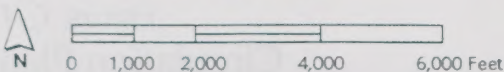


Figure C-2
Congested Intersections

The circulation goals and policies emphasize the need for a circulation system capable of serving both existing and future traffic demand. Maintaining community values and aesthetic character must be balanced with expanding the circulation system. The location, design, and modes of the circulation system have major impacts on air quality, noise, community appearance and other environmental resources. In some cases, congested operations will be accepted in lieu of adding roadway capacity, which could have significant right-of-way and environmental impacts, and could encourage additional regional traffic diversion.



Neighborhood Traffic Management

The City has established a comprehensive neighborhood traffic management program (NTMP) in November 1999 that specifies a process for implementing traffic calming measures designed to reduce or manage volumes and travel speeds on local streets, as well as a process for residents to petition the City for improvements. Traffic calming measures include changes in street alignment, street width reductions, installation of barriers or other physical devices, and enforcement to reduce traffic speeds and/or cut-through volumes, in the interest of street safety, livability, and other public purposes.

As congestion increases, the potential for diversion of traffic to local streets increases. The City will continue to take a proactive approach to maintaining traffic flows on the appropriate roadways. However, the NTMP will be required to address citizen complaints and provide a way to enhance neighborhoods and improve the residential quality of life in the City.

The NTMP may need to be periodically updated based on new or modified traffic calming measures and how they are implemented. In addition, the City will consider adopting a traffic impact fee to support NTMP traffic calming measures.

TRANSIT

One of the key components of the Circulation Plan is the promotion of alternative transportation modes such as transit, bicycling, and walking. Increasing the use of non-automobile transportation modes also produces a number of community benefits including reduced traffic, less need for costly roadway improvement projects, and improved air quality.

Bus Service

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) operates bus, light rail transit, and paratransit service throughout Santa Clara County. Bus transit service within the City of Los Altos includes six fixed routes (Routes 22, 23, 34, 51, 52, and 300) as shown on Figure C-3, and paratransit service (dial-a-ride service for qualified individuals). Paratransit service is operated under contract with OUTREACH, a private, non-profit paratransit broker. This door-to-door service is provided within the County to riders who meet eligibility requirements established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

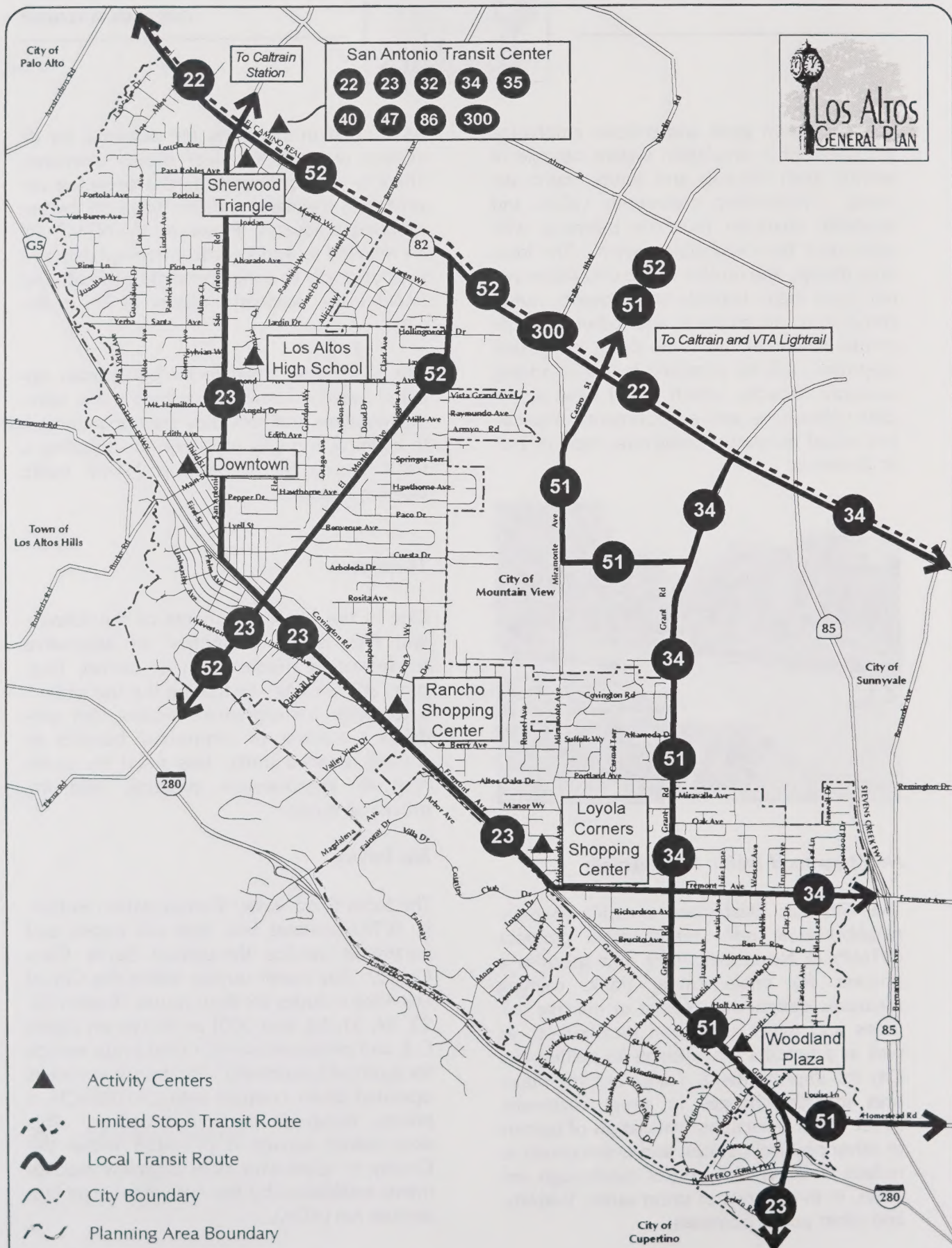


Figure C-3
Transit Routes



Bus routes in the City only provide service on Grant Road, Foothill Expressway, El Monte Avenue, San Antonio Road, El Camino Real, Fremont Avenue, and very short sections of Springer Road and Miramonte Avenue. Most transit routes are oriented in a north-south direction and are spaced from one-half to one mile apart. This layout makes it difficult for residents to utilize the bus routes effectively.

To increase bus ridership, transit facilities will need to be enhanced and provided as part of new development or redevelopment projects. More importantly, service frequency will need to be increased and travel times to regional destinations will have to decrease over current conditions. The City will work with the VTA to maximize ridership and improve regional and intra-city travel opportunities.

Rail Service

VTA light rail service can be accessed at the Downtown Mountain View Transit Center and provides links to employment centers in Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, North San Jose, and Milpitas. Service is provided at 10-minute headways during peak periods and light rail vehicles operate 24 hours a day.

Caltrain provides heavy rail passenger service between Gilroy in Santa Clara County, through San Mateo County, to San Francisco. Service is maintained and operated by the Joint Powers Board. The closest Caltrain stations to Los Altos are located on Central Expressway near San Antonio Road and also near Castro Street at the Downtown Mountain View Transit Center. The San Antonio station can be accessed by VTA bus service via Route 23 and a short walk, while VTA access to the Castro Street stop is provided directly via Routes 34 and 52, plus Route 51 and a short walk. Improved bus service or shuttle service from Los Altos to all nearby rail stations will be required to enhance rail travel as an option for City residents and employees.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Travel

The City of Los Altos has a number of existing and planned bikeways designated as paths, lanes, and routes. Descriptions of these classifications are presented below:

Bike Paths. Bike paths are paved facilities designated for bicycle use that are physically separated from roadways by space or a physical barrier, and are referred to as Class I bike paths.

Bike Lanes. Bike lanes are lanes on the outside edge of roadways reserved for the exclusive use of bicycles, and designated with special signing and pavement markings. Bike lanes are referred to as Class II bike facilities.

Bike Routes. Bike routes are roadways recommended for bicycle use and often connect to bike lanes and bike paths. Routes are designated with signs only and may not include additional pavement width. Bike routes are referred to as Class III facilities.

Enhancement of the bikeway system will continue as roadway improvements occur and planned projects are implemented through the CIP. Bikeway projects will focus on closing gaps in the existing system, making City facilities continuous with the regional system and eliminating parking in marked bicycle lanes except where permitted at certain times of day because of adjacent residential uses.

The City has prepared a 2002 Los Altos Bicycle Transportation Plan (BTP), which evaluates the City's existing bikeways and support services and recommends a variety of improvements to complete and enhance bicycle and multi-use bicycle/pedestrian paths. The City should ensure implementation of the proposed bicycle system through the recommended funding programs and the CIP consistent with the City's current adopted Bicycle Transportation Plan.

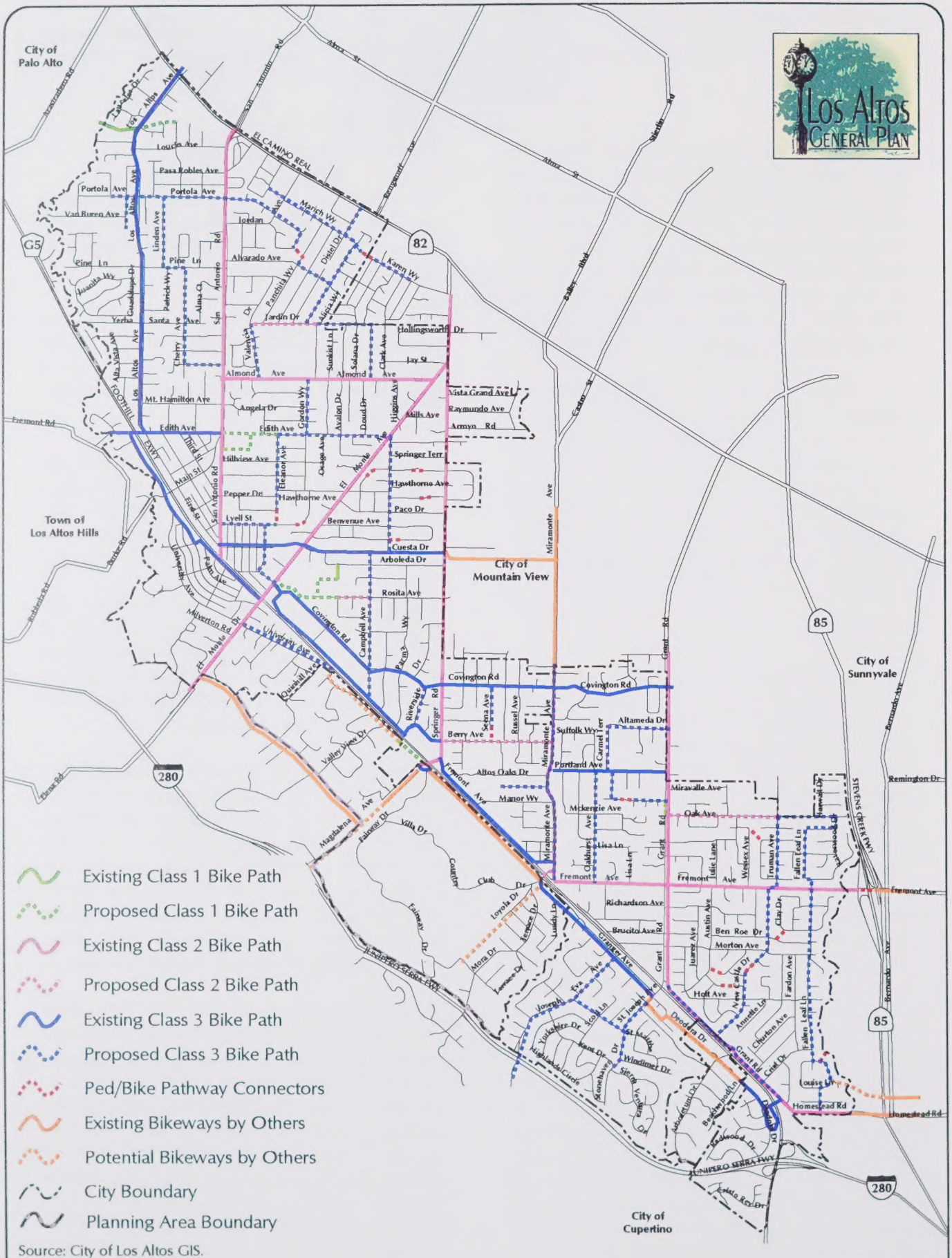


Figure C-4
Bikeways



Pedestrian facilities improve safety for pedestrians and can also encourage the use of other non-automobile modes of transportation. These facilities include sidewalks, paths, trails, pedestrian bridges, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals with crosswalks at signalized intersections to accommodate pedestrian circulation. For all key arterial and collector roadway segments, pedestrian path and bicycle lane enhancements should be included as part of regular maintenance (e.g., overlays) and new street upgrade projects (e.g., drainage modifications).

Where feasible, paths, trails and sidewalks and raised curbs should be added to provide a better physical separation between vehicles and pedestrians. Landscaping should be adequately maintained to provide clear pedestrian paths. All of these improvements will enhance flow and improve safety for all modes.

As shown in Figure C-5 segments requiring gap closures or better definition on at least one side of the street include Springer Road (between Cuesta Drive and El Monte Avenue), Grant Road (between Fremont Avenue and Covington Road), and Fremont Avenue (between Grant Road and the eastern City limit). These gaps should be closed to improve pedestrian travel and safety. Enhanced pedestrian access will provide an attractive alternative to automobile travel and will improve access to available transit facilities and services. Although some sidewalks and paths are well used by people walking for pleasure and exercise, an important objective for Los Altos is to make walking a preferred mode for non-recreational trips to the store, the workplace, and schools.

Enhancing bicycle and pedestrian travel within neighborhoods is a key issue for the safe travel of Los Altos school students. Although school districts have the most direct contact with parents and students, the City of Los Altos should work with each district to

ensure that students are provided with as much information as possible regarding safe travel to and from school. Thus, the City should work with each district to expand the current education efforts and prepare Suggested Route to School maps for each campus serving students residing in Los Altos. Other items such as a Guidelines for Safe Walking and Bicycling handbook can be distributed as part of the education process. Each of these items is described briefly below.

Each District should continue its education programs and should encourage students to walk and bicycle to school as appropriate. The City should continue to pursue opportunities to enhance pedestrian and bicycle facilities, especially in the vicinity of schools, through appropriate grants. The City was recently successful in obtaining a federal grant to establish a Safe Routes to School program for Loyola School on Berry Avenue. This grant will help to fund physical improvements to enhance pedestrian and bicycle routes and facilities, which will help delineate the appropriate routes for students to travel to and from the school.

PARKING

Parking is typically considered a separate issue from overall circulation. However, the presence of on-street parking has a direct effect on roadway capacity. In addition, off-street parking deficiencies can cause vehicles to re-circulate on public streets, which also increases traffic volumes and congestion by reducing capacity for through traffic.

The Los Altos zoning ordinance includes parking requirements to ensure that adequate numbers of spaces are provided on-site for most uses, as well as minimum stall dimensions that are consistent with current standards for other jurisdictions. These regulations apply to all new developments and may be applied to existing uses that are modified or expanded.

City of Palo Alto

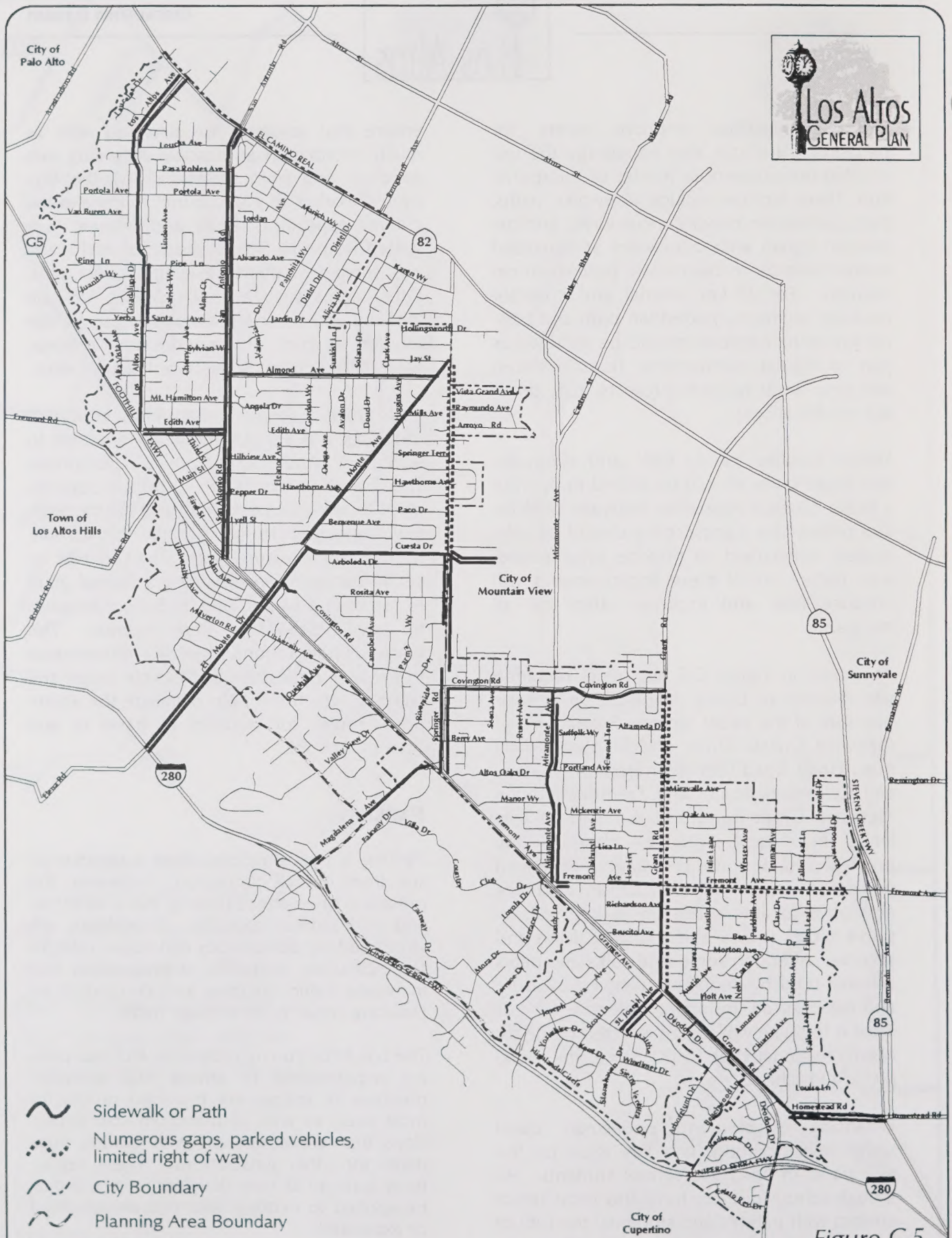


Figure C-5
Sidewalks and Paths
on Major Roadways

In commercial areas like the Downtown, adequate parking supplies will be provided to minimize intrusion into adjacent neighborhoods. However, facilities for non-automobile travel should be enhanced to encourage residents to walk, bicycle or take transit to nearby commercial establishments.

For residential areas, the City applies a roadway shoulder paving standard for parallel parking areas adjacent to streets.



TRUCK TRAFFIC

Even with increased through traffic on City streets, the number of trucks without a destination or origin in the City traffic is not expected to increase substantially. Additional development within Los Altos is expected to be limited given the fact that the City is mostly built out. Low volumes of truck traffic will be generated by the construction of new single-family homes or the limited redevelopment of other areas. This traffic is expected to have a negligible effect on overall Citywide circulation.

Given their connectivity between communities, the State Highway segments of SR 85, I-280, and U.S. Highway 101, and State Route 82 are considered to be primary truck routes. Designated truck routes through the City include Foothill Expressway, San Antonio Road (for vehicles making deliveries only within city limits) and El Monte Avenue between Foothill Expressway and I-280. No additional truck routes are required to serve the City's needs. Trucks making local deliveries should proceed by the shortest route to the nearest truck route for travel.



ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Los Altos has a local circulation system that includes vehicular, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian components. An interdependent system is created by the connection of this local system with a larger regional circulation system. A safe and convenient circulation system operation is needed to support planned land use in the community and manage through traffic that originates in and is destined for locations outside the City.

Five major issues are addressed by the goals, policies and plan of the Circulation Element. These major issues are:

- 1) supporting regional transportation facilities;
- 2) improving City roadways and traffic safety;
- 3) encouraging public transit;
- 4) improving bicycle and pedestrian travel; and
- 5) managing parking and truck traffic.

Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Element.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Transportation in Los Altos is directly related to an overall transportation network for the southern Bay Area. Roadway facilities within Los Altos accommodate regional traffic resulting from congestion on State Route 85, Interstate 280, Foothill Expressway and U.S. Highway 101. Planning for the needs of the community necessarily includes recognition of the related transportation needs and planning efforts of the surrounding communities, County and region. With that recognition is

the need for the City to actively monitor transportation planning in the surrounding area and strongly encourage regional transportation improvements.

Goal 1: Support development of an efficient regional transportation system

Policy 1.1: Promote improvement and maintenance of all regional highways, expressways, and freeways in the area, consistent with other circulation policies.

Policy 1.2: Discourage regional and subregional traffic from passing through the community.

Policy 1.3: Cooperate with regional agencies to promote area-wide transportation solutions, and actively participate in area-wide planning studies and commissions.

Policy 1.4: Support the completion of the countywide commuter lane network where necessary and where it can be completed in a manner that retains the character of the community and shall encourage rideshare programs.

Policy 1.5: Cooperate with adjacent communities to maintain adequate service levels at shared intersections.

LOCAL CIRCULATION SYSTEM

A well-designed local roadway system is needed to provide safe and convenient access to activities in Los Altos. The local roadway system serves the community's primary



need for mobility and includes a hierarchy of City streets to meet that need.

Certain local roadways, such as San Antonio Road, El Monte Avenue, Springer Road, Grant Road and Fremont Avenue accommodate regional traffic traveling through the community. During periods of heavy congestion, other local roadways are also affected by regional traffic.

The City has a strong desire to improve traffic safety within residential neighborhoods. Because of substantial amount of traffic on certain streets is through traffic, these vehicles travel at higher speeds, creating a safety problem for local residents. Traffic management or "traffic calming" techniques may be necessary to reduce the attractiveness of these streets with front-on housing to through traffic. A number of residential neighborhoods also need additional improvements to their local streets to provide safe vehicular and non-vehicular movement.

Goal 2: Provide for convenient and safe vehicular travel throughout Los Altos.

City Streets

Policy 2.1: Maintain a system of major streets bounding, but not penetrating residential areas, supplemented by a system of accessible regional rapid transit, highways, expressways and freeways.

Policy 2.2: Make the most use of existing major streets and roads, minimize the need for additional right-of-way and street widening.

Policy 2.3: Oppose significant widening of arterial and major collector streets within Los Altos.

Policy 2.4: Require development projects to mitigate their respective traffic and parking impacts by implementing practical and feasible street improvements.

Policy 2.5: Ensure that new development or redevelopment projects provide adequate property dedication to accommodate future roadway improvements at key intersections and other problem areas.

Policy 2.6: Implement and require developers to implement street improvements that accommodate and encourage the use of non-automobile travel modes including walking, bicycling, and transit.

Policy 2.7: Cooperate with adjacent jurisdictions to provide appropriate roadway transitions and street design.

Policy 2.8: Cooperate with adjacent communities to maintain adequate service levels at shared intersections.

Policy 2.9: Discourage traffic from using local streets to bypass congested intersections.

Policy 2.10: Investigate solutions to improve circulation in the Loyola Corners and Sherwood Gateway areas as outlined in their respective Specific Plans.



Neighborhood Issues

Policy 2.11: Achieve traffic volumes and speeds on collector and local streets that are compatible with the character of the adjacent land uses, the function of the street, and bicycle and pedestrian traffic.

Policy 2.12: Provide adequate maintenance of local streets and roadways.

Policy 2.13: Ensure that where appropriate Los Altos residential streets maintain their pleasant, semi-rural appearance.

Policy 2.14: Achieve residential street travel widths consistent with safe residential use of streets and with maintaining neighborhood character.

Policy 2.15: Discourage construction of private streets.

Policy 2.16: Implement the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program and related traffic calming measures to reduce the speed and volume of traffic on local streets within the community, especially in residential areas and adjacent to schools.

Safety

Policy 2.17: Maintain adequate emergency access for all land uses.

Policy 2.18: Investigate solutions for intersections and roadway segments with high accident rates.

Policy 2.19: Narrow street segments and intersection approaches at appropriate locations to improve pedestrian safety and reduce travel speeds.

Policy 2.20: Enhance driving safety in the community.

Policy 2.21: Continue to work with the police department to promote compliance with traffic laws to improve the safety of the local roadway system.

TRANSIT

To maximize use of the existing facilities and services, there is a need to increase the availability and use of public transit and non-vehicular methods of travel. Although commute travel by bus is sometimes made difficult by longer travel times, access to Caltrain and VTA light rail service in nearby Mountain View provides additional opportunities for Los Altos residents. This option to the traditional use of an automobile for traveling within and outside the community represents an important way of controlling congestion.

Goal 3: Promote local and regional transit as a viable alternative to automobile travel for all residents and especially for transit-dependent individuals.

Policy 3.1: Promote expansion of regional public transportation service and usage to provide alternative means of transportation and help reduce air pollution generated by automobiles.

Policy 3.2: Coordinate with the Valley Transportation Authority to increase bus service range and frequency within the City as appropriate.



Policy 3.3: Promote convenient and direct service to regional transit connections (BART, CalTrain, VTA Light Rail, etc.), to airports, and to activity centers.

Policy 3.4: Encourage the use of smaller buses to minimize environmental impacts on residential areas.

Policy 3.5: Encourage public transportation carriers to make every feasible effort to reduce noise emissions, including, but not limited to, consideration of noise when purchasing equipment and when routing and scheduling operations.

Policy 3.6: Encourage the public school districts, private schools, and other operators to develop a local bus system and to expand ride-sharing activities that will help to reduce school-generated vehicle traffic in neighborhoods and on City streets. Bussing should be the first measure considered to reduce school-generated traffic before substantial roadway capacity enhancements are implemented in the vicinity of school sites.

Policy 3.7: Investigate the feasibility of a local shuttle service within the City to reduce local traffic volumes and overall parking demand.

Policy 3.8: Encourage the early conversion to zero emissions vehicular systems by public transit providers.

Policy 3.9: Work with public transit provider to ensure that the equipment and facilities meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Policy 3.10: Encourage construction of safe, clean, and attractive transit stops which include seating.

BICYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

Non-vehicular methods or modes of travel, such as bicycling or walking, can also reduce demands on the roadway system where necessary improvements exist to promote those methods. The existing system, although extensive, needs gap closures and additional facilities to provide safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle travel as described in the City's 2002 Bicycle Transportation Plan. Together, public transit and non-vehicular modes can provide viable alternatives to travel by automobile.

Goal 4: Provide for the convenient and safe movement of bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the City to meet the commuter and recreation needs of the community.

Policy 4.1: Develop and maintain a comprehensive and integrated system of bikeways that promote bicycle riding for commuting and recreation.

Policy 4.2: Provide for safe and convenient pedestrian connections to and between Downtown, other commercial districts, neighborhoods and major activity centers within the City, as well as with surrounding jurisdictions.



Policy 4.3: Work with the school districts and community organizations to create a Safe Routes to School program to help ensure students are able to safely walk and bicycle to and from school.

Policy 4.4: Provide trails, sidewalks or separated pathways in areas where needed to provide safe bicycle and pedestrian access to schools.

Policy 4.5: Consider separated bicycle and pedestrian pathways along arterial and collector roadways.

Policy 4.6: Pursue potential rights-of-way such as Santa Clara Valley Water District and other utility easements for bicycle and pedestrian trail development.

Policy 4.7: Establish priorities for bicycle and pedestrian improvements commensurate with the volume of vehicular traffic and include those priorities when funding transportation-related projects.

Policy 4.8: Work with neighboring cities and other jurisdictions to provide safe and adequate pedestrian and bicyclist crossings along major roadways to minimize impediments caused by vehicular traffic, especially along major roadways such as El Camino Real, Foothill Expressway, and San Antonio Road.

Policy 4.9: Work with residents to identify appropriate locations, especially adjacent to school sites,

for the installation of pedestrian walkways that blend into the existing character of the community.

PARKING AND TRUCK TRAFFIC

Other components of the overall circulation system include vehicular travel include parking and truck traffic. From both a traffic flow and aesthetic standpoint the provision of adequate parking is important for all uses. Recirculating vehicles searching for parking in commercial areas is inefficient and reduces capacity. Although truck traffic is generally considered manageable in Los Altos, code enforcement should be maintained to ensure that regional traffic diverted to City streets does not include trucks.

Goal 5: Provide the appropriate amount of parking in residential neighborhoods and commercial areas to accommodate needs but not to encourage the use of automobile travel.

Residential Neighborhoods

Policy 5.1: Continue to encourage off-street parking in residential areas.

Policy 5.2: Enforce regulations prohibiting parking of commercial, recreation, and inoperable vehicles.

Policy 5.3: Reduce the amount of on-street parking in single-family residential neighborhoods caused by adjacent non-residential and multi-family residential uses.

Commercial Areas

Policy 5.4: Reduce the need for long-term and employee parking in the

Downtown core area through creative programs designed to reduce employee dependence on automotive commuting and need for parking.

Policy 5.5: Establish methods for providing for existing and future parking demands in the Downtown and other commercial areas in an economically feasible and aesthetically-pleasing manner.

Policy 5.6: Target parking that is close to destinations for short-term (customer) use and target outlying parking (edge of Downtown, but not in neighboring residential areas) for long-term (owner and employee) parking.

Goal 6: Limit the intrusion of commercial truck traffic on streets within the City.

Policy 6.1: Require trucks to only use Foothill Expressway, San Antonio Road (a limited truck route for deliveries within City limits), and El Monte Avenue between Foothill Expressway and I-280.

Policy 6.2: Encourage deliveries to be made during off-peak times (i.e., outside the morning and evening commute periods), especially in areas where intersections operate at unacceptable levels.





IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

The Implementation Programs Appendix provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and plans for City elected officials, staff and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Programs are to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a measure, procedure, or technique that requires additional City action. This action may either occur on a City-wide basis or in specific areas within the City. The City Council, by relating the Implementation Programs to the General Plan, recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

Use of the General Plan Implementation Program

The Implementation Programs are intended for use in preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the California Government Code. Because some of the individual actions and programs described in the Implementation Programs Appendix act as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by Section 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This Implementation Programs Appendix may be updated annually with the budget process and whenever the City's

General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness.



CIRCULATION

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Circulation Element. The Circulation Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Circulation Element.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

C 1: INTERJURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION

Coordinate planned development in the planning area with needed improvements to the regional circulation system by:

- 1) Supporting improvement of all regional highways, expressways, and freeways in the area; and
- 2) Coordinating with Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority regarding the planned roadway network improvements and transit services.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4

LOCAL CIRCULATION SYSTEM

C 2: CIRCULATION PLAN

Adopt the Circulation Plan as a part of the City's General Plan, consisting of Figure C-2 and accompanying text describing street classifications.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	2002 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.1, 2.7, 2.11, 2.12

C 3: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP)

Continue to use the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process to program and implement needed improvements to the street system.



Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.4, 2.7, 2.15, 2.16

C.4: REDEVELOPMENT OF STREETS

Develop a program for the replacement of streets.

Responsible Agency/Department	Public Works
Funding Source:	Assessment district, new dedicated tax or grants
Time Frame:	2004
Related Policies:	2.1

C 5: NEIGHBORHOOD TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Continue to implement the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program to reduce vehicle speeds where appropriate and control traffic volumes on local streets.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, Assessment fees, Grants
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.9, 2.11, 2.12, 2.17, 2.19, 2.20, 2.21, 2.22

C 6: TRAFFIC SIGNAL COORDINATION AND SYNCHRONIZATION

Coordinate traffic signal operations with the State, County, and adjacent communities where feasible. Install coordinated signal systems on all major arterial roadways in the City to improve traffic flow as appropriate. Funding should be obtained from all available City, County, State and Federal sources, as well as developer contributions.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.7, 2.8, 2.9

C 7: LEVEL OF SERVICE

Maintain a minimum Level of Service "D" operating standard at all signalized intersections under Los Altos jurisdiction. Identify minimum Levels of Service for intersections shared with adjacent communities and pursue agreements with adjacent communities to maintain those intersections at the agreed upon Level of Service.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.8, 2.9

**C 8: PROJECT REVIEW**

Evaluate development proposals and design roadway and access improvements based on established Level of Service standards and vehicle trip distribution to minimize impact on local residential and collector streets:

- 1) Require public review of any development project or other proposal that causes an intersection to degrade by one or more levels of service (e.g., LOS A to B, LOS B to D);
- 2) Require a transportation analysis for all development projects resulting in 50 or more net new daily trips. The analysis shall identify potential impacts to intersection and roadway operations, project access, and non-automobile travel modes, and shall identify feasible improvements or project modifications to reduce or eliminate impacts. Impact significance should be consistent with the criteria maintained by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. City staff should have the discretion to require focused studies regarding access, sight distance, and other operational and safety issues;
- 3) As part of the development review process, the primary access for major traffic generators should be established on arterial roadways, and overall access should be designed to minimize traffic intrusion to residential neighborhoods; and
- 4) Only after preparation of an environmental impact report with associated findings, accept Level of Service E or F operations at City-monitored signalized intersections after finding that no practical and feasible improvements can be implemented to mitigate the lower levels of service. A proposed development that causes or exacerbates LOS E or F operations and causes a significant intersection impact should be considered for approval if it will provide a clear, overall benefit to the City (e.g., library expansion or relocation, new community center).

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.4, 2.7, 2.9, 2.12

C 9: MONITOR TRAFFIC AND CIRCULATION

Monitor local traffic and circulation regularly to ensure safety and address congestion.

- 1) Identify potential capacity improvements and access modifications to maintain adequate circulation in the vicinity of major traffic generators (e.g., shopping centers);
- 2) Identify, monitor and pursue projects for specific sites of traffic safety or operational concerns;
- 3) Monitor all City-controlled signalized intersections operating at LOS E or F by conducting biennial peak-period traffic counts or obtaining counts from traffic studies. Also, monitor stop sign-controlled locations for potential signalization through counts and warrant analysis. Evaluate the results and report to the City Council; and
- 4) Consider installation of a traffic signal or other control device (e.g., traffic circle/roundabout) at a stop sign-controlled intersection if one or more of the controlled movements operates at LOS E or F, signal warrants are met to the satisfaction of the Public Works Department, or a safety problem exists.



Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.7, 2.8, 2.9, 2.12, 2.15, 2.16

C 10: BACKGROUND GROWTH ASSUMPTIONS

Re-assess every five years the assumptions of background growth (employment and traffic growth in Santa Clara County) and its effect on Los Altos traffic.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.1

C 11: NEIGHBORHOOD STREET LIGHTING

Examine nighttime accident rates and complaints in order to selectively locate street lighting.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: Assessment District
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.17

C 12: STREET DESIGN STANDARDS

Revise and/or adopt street design standards, focused on pedestrian and bicycle safety, landscaping, traffic calming and neighborhood character. If requested by the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, consider requiring (and require developers to provide) bus loading areas or turnouts for buses.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.1, 2.6, 2.9, 2.12, 2.16, 2.21

C 13: CONSISTENT RIGHT-OF-WAY

In areas where excess right-of-way is inconsistent with residential street design standards, consider programs to help create consistency.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.5

**TRANSIT****C 14: TRANSIT SERVICE LEVELS**

Work with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority to ensure maintenance of adequate service levels and to evaluate the need to modify routing, bus stop and shelter locations, scheduling, and equipment. Route adjustments should be made to include major collectors through the City and service should link Downtown and other commercial areas to neighborhoods.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.6, 3.7

C 15: TRANSIT STOP ENHANCEMENTS

Work with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and/or require development projects to provide transit stop enhancements including benches, shelters, schedule information, and real-time bus location data. Stop locations should be located near building entrances to encourage bus ridership.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1, 3.2

C 16: COORDINATE TRAVEL MODE IMPROVEMENTS

Identify bicycle and pedestrian projects in the CIP that help to complete or enhance connections to bus stops consistent with the Los Altos Bicycle Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8

C 17: DEMAND-RESPONSIVE SERVICE

Support the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority demand-responsive (OUTREACH) service and other paratransit operations.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1, 3.2

**C 18: ADVERTISE TRANSIT OPTIONS**

Work with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority to provide information to the public on available alternative transportation choices and routes. Information should be posted in commercial areas and in public buildings.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.2, 3.3

C 19: FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Encourage local businesses to provide employees with transit passes or other financial incentives to use transit to commute to and from the workplace.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	Private investment
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.6

C 20: SHUTTLE FEASIBILITY EVALUATION

A feasibility study should be completed to identify routes, stop locations, service frequency, and funding sources for operating costs of an intra-city shuttle system. Funding for the study should be obtained from federal and state grants/sources and private development projects.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	Federal and State Funds and Grants
Time Frame:	2002/2003
Related Policies:	3.7

C 21: EXPANSION OF REGIONAL TRANSIT SYSTEMS

Promote through regional cooperation the expansion and continued operation of Caltrain, BART and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority Light Rail and other transit systems.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1, 3.3

**BICYCLES AND PEDESTRIANS****C 22: BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

Implement the City's current Bicycle Transportation Plan to ensure development of bicycle facilities and amenities as follows:

- 1) Upgrade existing bikeways and develop new bicycle facilities in accordance with the standards and locations in the Los Altos Bicycle Plan;
- 2) Install bicycle-sensitive loop detectors at intersections through pavement management or new CIP projects;
- 3) Require the provision of secure bicycle parking (e.g., racks, lockers) as part of all future development projects for non-single-family residential development;
- 4) Encourage non-residential development projects to include amenities such as showers and lockers for employees to further encourage bicycling as an alternative to automobile travel;
- 5) Prohibit motorized vehicular traffic on trails, pathways, parks and dedicated open space areas except for maintenance and emergency purposes; and

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7

C 23: COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF BICYCLE ROUTES AND SAFETY

Develop a community awareness program to encourage local use of paths, lanes and routes including posting maps on the City's website. Include bicycle and pedestrian safety and enforcement when developing community awareness programs.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Police Department
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2, 4.3

C 24: SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Coordinate with the school districts and other entities to develop "Suggested Route to School Plans" for all public and private schools in the City and for schools serving students living in Los Altos. Plans shall identify all pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and traffic control devices for residents to determine the most appropriate travel route. The plans shall also identify existing easements for sidewalks.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Police Department
Funding Source:	General Fund, Grants
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6


C 25: IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION AND SAFETY

Increase priority of pedestrian safety projects (i.e., pedestrian street crossings, sidewalks or pathways) as part of the Capital Improvement Program. Review the need to install sidewalks or paths and crosswalks on all City streets within one-half mile of all public schools within the City. Paths should also be provided to enhance access to schools in other jurisdictions that serve students residing in Los Altos.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Police Department
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6

C 26: BICYCLE FACILITY FUNDING

Make bikeway improvements a funding priority by:

- 1) Continuing to consider financing bikeway design and construction as part of the City's annual construction and improvement fund;
- 2) Incorporating bikeway improvements as part of the Capital Improvement Program and pavement management efforts; and
- 3) Aggressively pursuing regional funding and other Federal and State sources for new bikeways.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.4, 4.5, 4.6

PARKING AND TRUCK TRAFFIC
C 27: SPECIAL PARKING STANDARDS

Establish special parking standards as follows:

- 1) Require on-site covered parking in review of alterations to existing residential structures;
- 2) Provide for an adequate supply of short-term parking in commercial retail zones; and
- 3) Regulate commercial parking lots to protect residential neighbors to include times and location of commercial deliveries and garbage collection, overnight parking, and other unauthorized use.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	5.1, 5.4

**C 28: PARKING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Develop a parking management program in the Downtown periphery, Downtown core, and in other commercial areas. Consider the following solutions to address parking constraints in commercial lots:

- 1) Parking space time restrictions (e.g., 30 minute parking);
- 2) Metered parking;
- 3) Shared parking for businesses with off peak hours;
- 4) Employee parking location and/or time restrictions; and
- 5) Restrictions on time and location of commercial deliveries (e.g., outside peak periods).

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	2002/2003 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.2

C 29: UNDERGROUND/ABOVE-GROUND PARKING

Undertake a study to assess the feasibility of underground/above-ground parking in the Downtown.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	2002/2003
Related Policies:	5.6

C 30: TRAFFIC AND PARKING IMPACT FEES

Consider establishing traffic impact fees to reduce the impact of new development or redevelopment. Consider parking fees in lieu of providing required parking in the Downtown area to encourage additional housing opportunities.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.13, 5.3

C 31: PARKING ASSESSMENT DISTRICTS

Consider establishing a parking assessment district to expand Downtown parking and provide parking for other commercial areas.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees, private funds
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6

**C 32: CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Expedite responses to requests for inoperable vehicle removal and apply neighborhood blight ordinance standards.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	2002/2003
Related Policies:	5.2

C 33: TRUCK ROUTE ENFORCEMENT

Continue to strictly enforce the truck route ordinance by citing violators. Enforcement will be provided by the police department similar to other on-street parking areas in the City.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.1

C 34: LOADING ZONES

Establish, maintain, and enforce reserved commercial truck loading zones on public streets in appropriate areas such as downtown and other commercial concentrations. Time limits for designated loading areas may be established to allow public on-street parking in loading zones at other times. Require new or redevelopment projects to provide on-site truck loading areas except for areas such as Downtown, which includes small lots.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.2

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND
HAZARDS ELEMENT



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HAZARDS ELEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element	1
Scope and Content of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element	1
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	2
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	5

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HAZARDS PLAN

Seismic and Geologic Hazards	6
Flood Hazards	7
Fire Hazards	9
Hazardous Materials	9
Emergency Preparedness	9
Noise	10
Air Quality	21

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Seismic and Geologic Hazards	22
Flood Hazards	22
Fire Hazards	23
Hazardous Materials	23
Emergency Preparedness	23
Noise	24
Air Quality	26

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX



LIST OF TABLES

NEH-1	Land Use Compatibility Standards	11
NEH-2	Distance to Existing CNEL Contour Lines	13
NEH-3	Distance to Future CNEL Contour Lines	17

LIST OF FIGURES

NEH-1	Hazards	8
NEH-2	Existing Noise Contours	16
NEH-3	Future Noise Contours	20

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HAZARDS ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

Natural events and conditions such as earthquakes, landslides, flooding, and fire can endanger human life and property, while hazardous conditions due to human activity, such as noise and air pollutants, can impact community safety and quality of life. Los Altos seeks to protect the community from unreasonable risks associated with natural hazards and to minimize the hazards associated with human activities. The Natural Environment & Hazards Element establishes goals, policies and a plan for that purpose.

PURPOSE OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HAZARDS ELEMENT

The purpose of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element is to identify and address those features or characteristics in or near the City's planning area which represent a potential hazard to the people, property, and/or infrastructure in Los Altos. Goals and policies in the element are intended to protect the community from injury, loss of life, property damage, and deteriorating quality of life resulting from natural hazards and hazards relating to human activity.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HAZARDS ELEMENT

The Los Altos Natural Environment & Hazards Element satisfies the requirements of two state-mandated components of the General Plan: the Safety Element and the Noise Element. Air quality is also addressed in this element to comply with the requirements of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD).

According to Government Code Section 65302(g), the Safety Element establishes poli-

cies and programs to protect the community from risks associated with seismic, geologic, flood, and fire hazards. Specifically, the element must cover the following topics:

- ❖ Seismically induced conditions including ground shaking, surface rupture, ground failure, tsunami, and seiche;
- ❖ Slope instability leading to mudslides and landslides;
- ❖ Subsidence and other geologic hazards;
- ❖ Wildland and urban fires; and
- ❖ Evacuation routes.

As specified in Government Code Section 65302(f), the Noise Element must identify and appraise noise problems in the community to ensure acceptable levels of noise exposure. Existing (baseline) and future noise conditions are quantified as noise exposure contours. This information serves as the basis to develop guidelines for compatible land uses.

The Natural Environment & Hazards Element is comprised of four sections: 1) Introduction, 2) the Natural Environment & Hazards Plan; 3) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs Appendix. The Plan provides background information and explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, natural hazards and hazards associated with human activity are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of the community's desires, are comprised of broad statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for determining acceptable risks/impacts, regulating development in hazard-prone areas, reducing or avoiding adverse effects, and ensuring land use compatibility.



The Natural Environment & Hazards Implementation Programs Appendix identifies the specific implementation programs for this element.

RELATED LAWS, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

There are a number of existing plans and programs that directly relate to the goals of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element. Enacted through state and local action, these plans and programs are administered by agencies with responsibility for their enforcement.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in response to a public mandate for a thorough environmental analysis of projects that might adversely affect the environment. The provisions of the law, review procedure and any subsequent analysis are described in the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines as amended in 1998. Safety hazards, as well as noise and air quality impacts are recognized as environmental impacts under CEQA.

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act

The Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act requires the state Geologist to identify earthquake fault zones along traces of both recently and potentially active major faults. Cities and counties that contain such zones must inform the public regarding zone location.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

Pursuant to the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act, the state Geologist compiles maps identifying seismic hazard zones. Development in seismic hazard areas is subject to policies and criteria established by the State Mining and Geology Board. Additionally, approval of development on a site within a seismic hazard

area mandates the preparation of a geotechnical report and local agency consideration of compliance with applicable state requirements.

Landslide Hazard Identification Program

The Landslide Hazard Identification Program requires the state Geologist to prepare maps of landslide hazards within urbanizing areas.

Colbey-Alquist Floodplain Management Act

The Colbey-Alquist Floodplain Management Act encourages local governments to plan, adopt and enforce land use regulations for floodplain management, in order to protect people and property from flooding hazards. This act also identifies requirements which jurisdictions must meet in order to receive state financial assistance for flood control.

Santa Clara Valley Water District

The Santa Clara Valley Water District is a special district with responsibility for water supply, flood protection and watershed management in Santa Clara County.

Santa Clara County General Plan Safety Element

The Santa Clara County General Plan Safety Element identifies geologic and other natural hazards. A key strategy of the element for reducing the potential risks to life and property from natural hazards is to minimize the number of people who permanently reside in high hazard areas.

Los Altos Flood Hazard Area Regulations Ordinance

The City's Flood Hazard Area Regulations (adopted as part of the Municipal Code) establish regulations of use, structures, grading and streambed alteration within designated flood, flood-related erosion, and mudslide hazard areas. These provisions



hazard areas. These provisions apply to property identified in the Flood Insurance Study for the City of Los Altos (dated July 16, 1980) and the Flood Insurance Rate Map generated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.



Hazardous Waste Management Plan

The Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Management Plan provides basic policy direction to address current and future hazardous waste management issues. All facilities and personnel of the County and affected cities are organized in the plan to effectively respond to hazardous materials emergencies.

California Noise Insulation Standards

The California Commission of Housing and Community Development officially adopted noise insulation standards in 1974. Revised in 1988, the standards established an interior noise standard of 45 dBA for residential space (CNEL or Ldn). Acoustical studies are required for residential structures proposed within noise contours of 60 dBA or greater from industrial or transportation noise sources to demonstrate compliance with interior noise standards.

Uniform Building Code

The Uniform Building Code includes Sound Transmission Control standards for building construction under Appendix 12, Division 2/2a.

Los Altos Noise Control Ordinance

The City's Noise Ordinance (adopted as part of the Municipal Code) establishes interior and exterior noise standards for daytime and nighttime hours by zoning district, identifies prohibited acts relative to noise, including maximum noise levels for mobile and stationary noise sources, and special exemptions. Noise Ordinance requirements are identified in this Element.

Federal Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) in 1970 for six pollutants: carbon

monoxide, ozone, particulates, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and lead. The Act requires states with air pollution that exceeds the NAAQS to prepare air quality plans demonstrating how the standards would be met (State Implementation Plans-SIPs). In 1990, amendments to the Act established categories of severity for non-attainment areas ("marginal" to "extreme"). In 1994, the California Air Resources Board adopted a revised State Implementation Plan for ozone to meet the requirements of the 1990 amendments.

California Clean Air Act

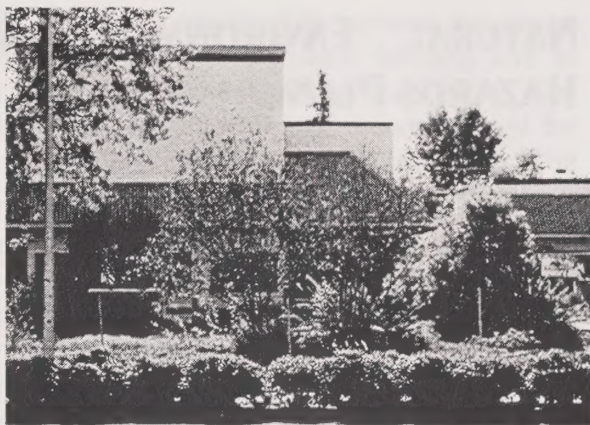
The California Clean Air Act (CCAA) was enacted in 1988 requiring attainment of California's ambient air quality standards. Amended in 1992 and 1996, the state's ambient air quality standard are more stringent than the national standards. In general, the CCAA requires regions whose air quality exceeds state standards to reduce pollutants by five percent or more per year, or to implement all feasible measures to meet the state air quality standards as expeditiously as possible.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

The City adopted an Emergency Preparedness Plan outlining disaster response that will minimize harmful impacts. The plan is implemented by the local Police and Fire Departments, in conjunction with the Santa Clara County Office of Emergency Services. The disaster plan conforms to state requirements in designating the emergency operations center and emergency shelters, assigning duties to City staff, identifying critical facilities (e.g., medical buildings and utilities), and establishing an emergency broadcast system. The Disaster Preparedness Committee functions to support the Plan, develop implementation programs to educate community members, and to advise the City Council on the Community Emergency Response Team and disaster preparedness projects.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

According to state planning law, the Natural Environment & Hazards Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. While all of the elements are interdependent, they are also interrelated to a degree. Certain goals and policies of each element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of issues throughout the General Plan creates a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Natural Environment & Hazards Element is most directly related to Land Use, Housing, and Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Elements.





NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HAZARDS PLAN

As in all communities, natural conditions and human activities occur in Los Altos which have an effect on the quality of life of its residents. Reducing the risks associated with such hazards and being prepared for emergency situations is essential for creating an attractive and healthy environment for residences and businesses within the City. This section of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element identifies the City's approach for reducing potential hazards from natural conditions and human activities, along with the City's emergency preparedness plan. The Plan is based on goals and policies identified in the subsequent section of this element.

SEISMIC AND GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

The City of Los Altos is located in a region with active seismic faults and is therefore subject to risk of hazards associated with earthquakes. Seismic activity poses two types of hazards: primary and secondary. Primary hazards include ground rupture, ground shaking, ground displacement, and subsidence and uplift from earth movement. Primary hazards can induce secondary hazards including ground failure (lurch cracking, lateral spreading, and slope failure), liquefaction, water waves (tsunamis and seiches), movement on nearby faults (sympathetic fault movement), dam failure and fires.

No known active faults traverse Los Altos planning area and no Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning has been established by the state. However, the city is located between the active San Andreas and Hayward faults, as well as numerous smaller faults.

Ground Rupture: Because there are no active faults within the planning area, the potential for ground rupture and ground failure is low.

Ground Shaking: Given the City's proximity to active faults in the region, seismic ground shaking could damage buildings and cause objects to fall, creating hazards to life and property.

According to the 1996 U.S. Geological Survey shaking-hazard map, Los Altos, like most of the Bay Area and coastal California, has the highest hazard level for ground shaking. Los Altos has a ground motion hazard value used to establish construction requirements, determine insurance rates, estimate landslide potential, and allocate federal assistance funds.

In a probable earthquake scenario, the majority of one- and two-story wood structures in the planning area would not sustain serious damage. Older, unreinforced masonry buildings in the downtown area that were built prior to improved building codes may be subject to severe damage or collapse in the event of an earthquake.

Slope Failure: Landslides are most likely on hillsides where rock strata parallels surface slopes, high clay content absorbs excess water, displacement has fractured a fault zone, or the base of a slope has been removed by erosion or people.

Landslides are unlikely to occur where slopes are less than 15 percent. Within the Los Altos planning area, slopes that are 15 percent or more are isolated to the southwest portions of the City (See Figure NEH-1). While there are no recent examples of landslides in the planning area, development on such slopes should be carefully reviewed for mitigation of landslide risks.



Liquefaction: Liquefaction occurs primarily in areas of recently deposited sands and silts with poorly consolidated sediment and in areas of high groundwater levels. Los Altos sits on the very deep alluvial soils of the Santa Clara Valley floor. These soils, consisting of silt, clay, sand, and gravel deposits, extend to a depth of 4,000 to 5,000 feet throughout most of the city. Although severe ground motion resulting from an earthquake would be apparent in Los Altos because of the depth of the loosely consolidated soils, damage generally would not be serious to the predominant one- or two-story wood frame structures.

Tsunami/Seiche: Los Altos is located five to six miles from the Bay with an elevation of 150 feet or more above sea level. Consequently, potential hazards associated with water waves are not likely.

Earthquake preparedness is one of the best methods to minimize personal injury and property damage and accelerate recovery. The City will continue to promote earthquake preparedness in the community through its Emergency Preparedness Plan and mock exercises coordinated through the Emergency Preparedness Committee.

FLOOD HAZARDS

Flood hazards fall into three categories: natural flooding, dam inundation, and mud and debris flows. Los Altos is subject to periodic flood hazards associated with creek overflow, dam inundation, and potential mud and debris flows during rain storms of a few hillsides within the planning area. The Los Altos planning area contains both 100- and 500-year floodplain areas as shown on Figure NEH-1.

Natural Flooding

Natural flooding occurs when major rainstorms cause stream overflows. Portions of the four creeks flowing through Los Altos

have been channelized to increase the capacity of the creeks to reduce flooding and to permit development of the flood plain. Further channelization is not recommended for any of the creeks in Los Altos because of the conflict with preservation of natural resources.

Adobe Creek is the most flood-prone of Los Altos creeks. The Santa Clara Valley Water district has requested the City to require setbacks along the creek and to require property owners to dedicate an easement or fee title to the District. In accordance with the adopted watercourse protection regulations, special setbacks are required and development restrictions applied along Adobe Creek from Shoup Park to O'Keefe Lane.

Dam Inundation

Dam inundation could occur with the failure of the Stevens Creek Dam. California Government Code Section 8589.5 requires the city to have in place emergency procedures for the evacuation and control of populated areas within the limits of inundation below dams. In addition, real estate disclosure upon sale or transfer of property in the inundation area is required under AB 1195 Chapter 65 passed in June 1998.

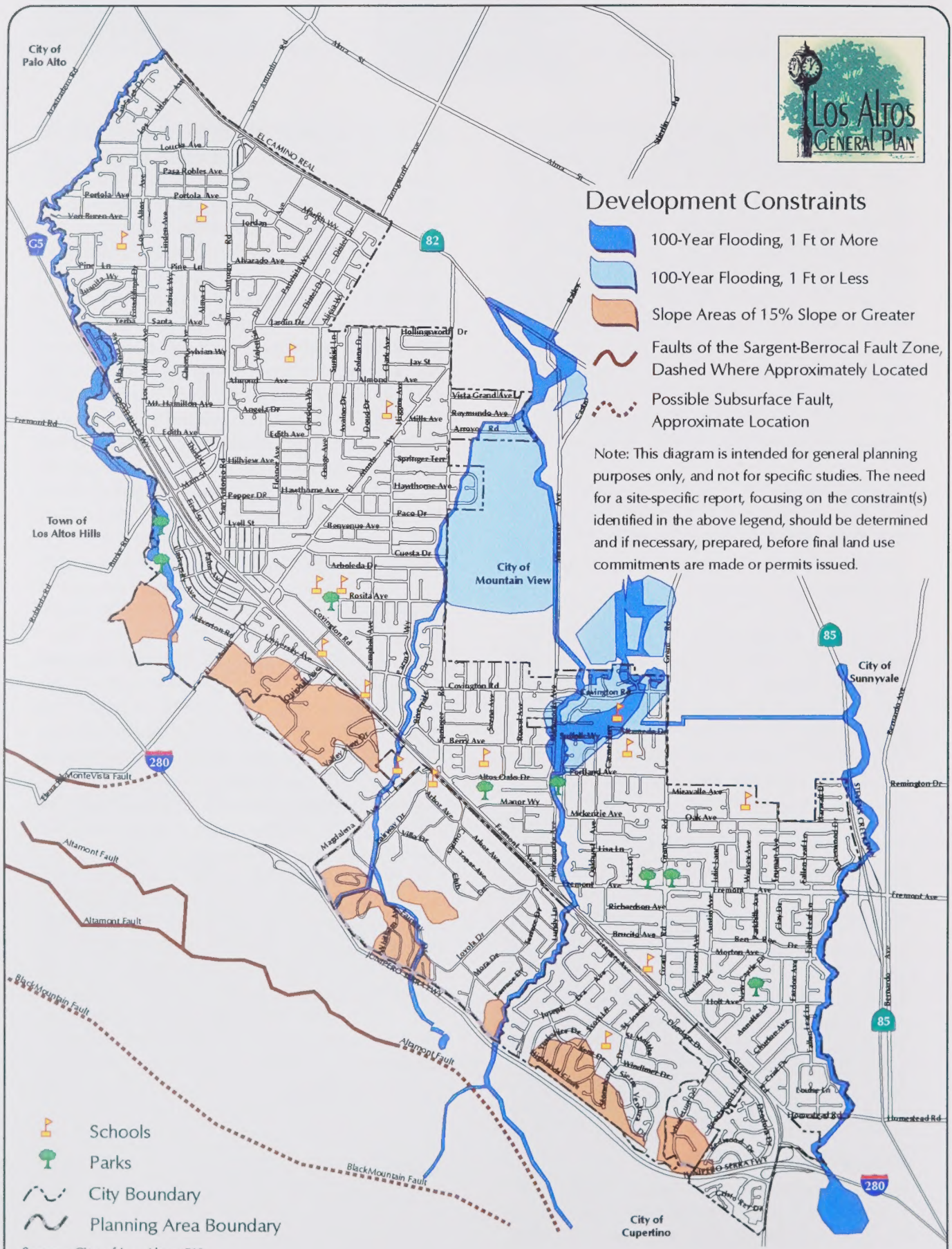
Los Altos participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The NFI program provides federal flood insurance and federally financed loans for property owners in flood prone areas. To qualify for federal flood insurance, the City must identify flood hazard area and implement a system of protective controls. See Figure NEH-1.



Development Constraints

-  100-Year Flooding, 1 Ft or More
-  100-Year Flooding, 1 Ft or Less
-  Slope Areas of 15% Slope or Greater
-  Faults of the Sargent-Berrocal Fault Zone, Dashed Where Approximately Located
-  Possible Subsurface Fault, Approximate Location

Note: This diagram is intended for general planning purposes only, and not for specific studies. The need for a sitespecific report, focusing on the constraint(s) identified in the above legend, should be determined and if necessary, prepared, before final land use commitments are made or permits issued.



-  Schools
-  Parks
-  City Boundary
-  Planning Area Boundary

Source: City of Los Altos GIS.

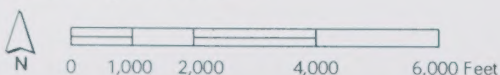


Figure NEH-1
Hazards



Mud and Debris Flows

Mud and debris flows originate in hillside areas having deep top soils with poor drainage. The majority of the Los Altos planning area is relatively flat terrain that is not subject to mud and debris flows. The rolling terrain in the southwest portion of the planning area contains deep soils consisting of silt, clay, sand, and gravel deposits. While there are no recent examples of mud or debris flows in the planning area, development in the southwest slopes should be carefully reviewed for mitigation of mud and debris flow risks.

The City will reduce the potential for flood hazards by implementing the adopted flood hazard area regulations for designated floodways, mudflow prone areas, and flood-related erosion prone areas.

FIRE HAZARDS

Wildland fire hazards are not a major concern in Los Altos because the community is urbanized and most of the natural vegetation is isolated in small areas. Urban fire hazards in Los Altos are concentrated primarily in dense non-residential areas with limited landscape and separation between structures.

The City will reduce the potential for dangerous fires by coordinating with the Santa Clara County Fire Department to implement fire hazard education and fire protection programs. The City will also ensure that construction is consistent with the current Uniform Fire Code and that water pressure is adequate for fire fighting purposes.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

In Los Altos, commercial businesses that use hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, dry cleaners, film processors, auto

service providers, and medical clinics. Residences also generate household hazardous wastes in the form of paints, thinners, pesticides, fertilizers, etc.

Hazardous waste generators and users in the City are required to comply with regulations enforced by several federal, state, and county agencies. The regulations aim toward reducing risk associated with human exposure to hazardous materials and minimizing adverse environmental effects. Los Altos contracts with the Santa Clara County Fire Department for fire protection services. The Fire Department conducts inspections related to hazardous materials. The Hazardous Materials Compliance Division of the County Environmental Health Services Department ensures compliance and reporting in accordance with the Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.

Hazardous materials also pass through the City in route to other designations via the freeway, rail, and surface street system. The Department of Transportation (DOT) regulates the transport of hazardous materials on state highways and rail lines using established criteria for safe handling procedures. Federal safety standards are also included in the California Administrative Code and the California Health Services Department regulates the haulers of hazardous waste.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The first line of defense against any catastrophe is to avoid threatening situations and to prepare disaster response plans that will minimize the harmful impacts. Quick action in the event of an emergency will reduce the probability of additional injuries and damage.

Government disaster preparedness planning efforts are handled primarily by the police departments and the County Office of Emer-



gency Services. The County and each city are required to prepare disaster plans in accordance with state regulations, to assign duties for emergency response, to designate an emergency operations center and emergency shelters, and to establish an emergency broadcast system.

The City adopted an Emergency Preparedness Plan identifying potential risks, facilities and resources relied upon in the event of a catastrophe, and persons responsible for implementation. The City's Emergency Preparedness Committee determines the appropriate means of community support, develops and implements programs to educate and prepare the community for emergencies, and advises the City Council. The Emergency Preparedness Plan should be updated and coordinated with appropriate county and regional agencies.

NOISE

In Los Altos, the predominant source of noise is transportation-related noise from vehicle and truck traffic on the City's road system. Commercial noise sources in Los Altos are not significant enough to warrant identification as significant stationary noise sources. In order to minimize impacts associated with transportation-related noise sources, residential development and redevelopment proposed within areas where a noise of 60 dBA is or will be exceeded should conduct acoustical analysis to ensure compliance with the City's noise level standards.

Noise is generally defined as unwanted sound – unwanted being dependent on when and where the sound occurs, what the listener is doing, characteristics of the sound, and how intrusive it is above background sound levels. Noise hazards are a function of increasing mechanization, with noise being principally produced by machines for transportation and production. In Los Altos, traffic movement on

the City's road system is the predominant source of noise.

Noise levels are measured on a logarithmic scale in decibels which are then weighted and added over a 24-hour period to reflect not only the magnitude of the sound but also its duration, frequency, and time of occurrence. In this manner, various acoustical scales and units of measurement have been developed such as equivalent sound levels (Leq), day-night average sound levels (Ldn) and Community Noise Equivalent Levels (CNEL).

These measurements become the basis for setting acceptable standards at sensitive noise receptors and identifying potential noise generators. The State of California Office of Noise Control, in its Land Use Compatibility Standards table (Table NEH-1), defines an outdoor level of Ldn 60 dBA or less as being "normally acceptable" for residential uses, schools, libraries, churches, and hospitals. This standard also intends to provide for interior noise levels no greater than 45 dBA (Ldn), which is generally accepted as the maximum acceptable noise level for most indoor residential activities. Maximum noise exposure levels acceptable in Los Altos are consistent with the standards in Table NEH-1.

In 1974, the state adopted Noise Insulation Standards (Chapter 2-35 of Title 24) for new hotels, motels, and dwellings other than single family detached dwellings. Those standards established 45 dBA (Ldn) as the maximum interior sound level (attributable to exterior sources) in any room. Where exterior sound levels are 60 dBA (Ldn) or above, acoustical analyses for projects are required to ensure that the structure has been designed to limit outside noise to the allowable interior levels.



Table NEH-1
Land Use Compatibility Standards

Land Use	Community Noise Exposure (Ldn or CNEL)					
	55	60	65	70	75	80
Residential	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Transient Lodging – Motel, Hotel	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Schools, Libraries, Churches, Hospitals, Nursing Homes	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Auditoriums, Concert Halls, Amphitheaters	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Sports Arena, Outdoor Spectator Sports	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Playgrounds, Parks	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Golf Course, Riding Stables, Water Recreation, Cemeteries	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Office Buildings, Business Commercial, and Professional	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
Industrial, Manufacturing, Utilities, Agriculture	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable
	Normally Acceptable	Normally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Conditionally Acceptable	Normally Unacceptable	Clearly Unacceptable

Source: Modified by CBA from 1998 State of California General Plan Guidelines.

-  **Normally Acceptable:** Specified land use is satisfactory, based upon the assumption that any buildings involved meet conventional Title 24 construction standards. No special noise insulation requirements.
-  **Conditionally Acceptable:** New construction or development shall be undertaken only after a detailed noise analysis is made and noise reduction measures are identified and included in the project design.
-  **Normally Unacceptable:** New construction or development is discouraged. If new construction is proposed, a detailed analysis is required, noise reduction measures must be identified, and noise insulation features included in the design.
-  **Clearly Unacceptable:** New construction or development should not be undertaken.



Title 24 also includes standards to be met for sound transmission between units. Multi-family attached units must incorporate noise reduction features sufficient to assure that interior noise levels in all habitable rooms do not exceed 45 dBA.

Existing Noise Sources in Los Altos

Noise emanates from stationary and mobile sources. Fixed sources include construction, refrigeration units, radio or television, loud speakers, power tools (including leaf blowers), and animals. Mobile noise sources typically are transportation related. In Los Altos, motor vehicles on the City's roadway system are the major source of continuous noise.

The state's planning laws require identification of areas exposed to high noise levels. "Noise exposure areas" are defined as those areas where noise levels exceed 60 dBA (Ldn). In Los Altos, these noise exposure areas exist along some collector streets, minor arterials, and principal arterials with high traffic volumes and relatively high speeds. The distance from the road centerline to points at which noise levels are 80, 75, 70, 65, and 60 dBA have been calculated from the 2001 Average Daily Traffic (ADT) for arterials and collectors throughout Los Altos. Assumptions and results are listed in Table NEH-2 and shown in Figure NEH-2.

No commercial or industrial uses have been identified to be major on-going noise sources for which noise contours need to be prepared.

Projected Future Noise Sources

Growth in and near Los Altos will generate increased traffic volumes and thereby increase the exposure to high noise levels. Resulting future noise contours for the year 2025 are shown in Table NEH-3 and Figure NEH-3.

Land use planning, with appropriate noise reduction mitigation, will establish land use, site, and building design acceptable for new development adjacent to major roadways. Acoustic architectural design, involving site plans, building heights, room arrangements, window size, balcony and courtyard design, and acoustic construction, involving treatment of various parts of a building to reduce interior noise levels, shall be considered in mitigating noise hazards at new developments.

Noise barriers should be considered when other mitigation is infeasible. Ideally, noise barriers will incorporate berms, walls, and appropriate landscaping to reduce the visual impact of the sound walls.

Certain areas within Los Altos are subject to high noise levels. The primary noise source impacting Los Altos results from transportation-related activities, especially along major transportation corridors. Other noise sources not related to transportation include construction, business operation, recreational activities, and property maintenance. Consideration of the sources and recipients of noise early in the land use planning and development process can be an effective method of minimizing the impact of noise on people in the community. Consideration may be given to reducing noise in areas already impacted by noise through rehabilitative improvements and enforcement of local noise regulations.





Table NEH-2
Distance to Existing CNEL Contour Lines

Roadway/Reach	Speed Limit mph	% Trucks	Average Daily Traffic	CNEL @ 50' from near lane C/L	Distance to Existing Contours From Near Lane Centerline, feet				
					60dB	65dB	70dB	75dB	80dB
Almond Avenue:									
E of San Antonio	25	1.8/0.7%	7,380	61.0	62	-	-	-	-
E of Solana	25	1.8/0.7%	6,010	60.0	50	-	-	-	-
Covington Road:									
E of El Monte	25	1.8/0.7%	3,610	58.0	-	-	-	-	-
W of Springer	25	1.8/0.7%	2,670	57.0	-	-	-	-	-
E of Springer	25	1.8/0.7%	5,220	59.5	-	-	-	-	-
E of Miramonte	25	1.8/0.7%	5,910	60.0	50	-	-	-	-
Cristo Rey Drive:									
W of Foothill	30	1.8/0.7%	6,950	64.0	110	-	-	-	-
Cuesta Drive:									
E of El Monte	25	1.8/0.7%	8,540	61.5	69	-	-	-	-
San Antonio - El Monte	25	1.8/0.7%	5,830	60.0	50	-	-	-	-
Distel Drive:									
S of El Camino Real	25	1.8/0.7%	2,190	56.5	-	-	-	-	-
Edith Avenue:									
Los Altos - San Antonio	25	1.8/0.7%	7,210	61.0	62	-	-	-	-
El Monte Avenue:									
S of Foothill Expy.	25	2.0/2.0%	31,180	69.0	255	110	-	-	-
N of Foothill Expy.	25	1.8/0.7%	14,660	64.0	110	-	-	-	-
S of Jay	25	1.8/0.7%	12,290	63.0	90	-	-	-	-
Fallen Leaf Lane:									
N of Fremont	25	1.8/0.7%	1,180	54.0	-	-	-	-	-
S of Fremont	25	1.8/0.7%	2,860	57.5	-	-	-	-	-
N of Homestead	25	1.8/0.7%	1,410	54.5	-	-	-	-	-
Fremont Avenue:									
Miramonte - Grant	35	1.8/0.7%	9,360	65.0	130	50	-	-	-
Grant - Truman	35	1.8/0.7%	17,500	67.5	200	83	-	-	-
E of Truman	35	1.8/0.7%	23,470	69.0	255	110	-	-	-
Granger Avenue:									
N of Grant	25	1.8/0.7%	1,510	55.0	-	-	-	-	-
Grant Road:									
Foothill Exwy. - Morton	25	1.8/0.7%	14,120	63.5	100	-	-	-	-
	25	1.8/0.7%	11,880	63.0	90	-	-	-	-
Morton - Fremont	35	1.8/0.7%	21,370	68.5	235	100	-	-	-
N of Fremont	35	1.8/0.7%	24,200	69.0	255	110	-	-	-
S of North City Limits									
Homestead Road:									
S of Grant	35	1.8/0.7%	4,030	61.5	69	-	-	-	-
W of SR-85	35	1.8/0.7%	15,660	67.0	185	75	-	-	-
Jordan Avenue:									
S of El Camino Real	25	1.8/0.7%	2,890	57.5	-	-	-	-	-



Table NEH-2
Distance to Existing CNEL Contour Lines

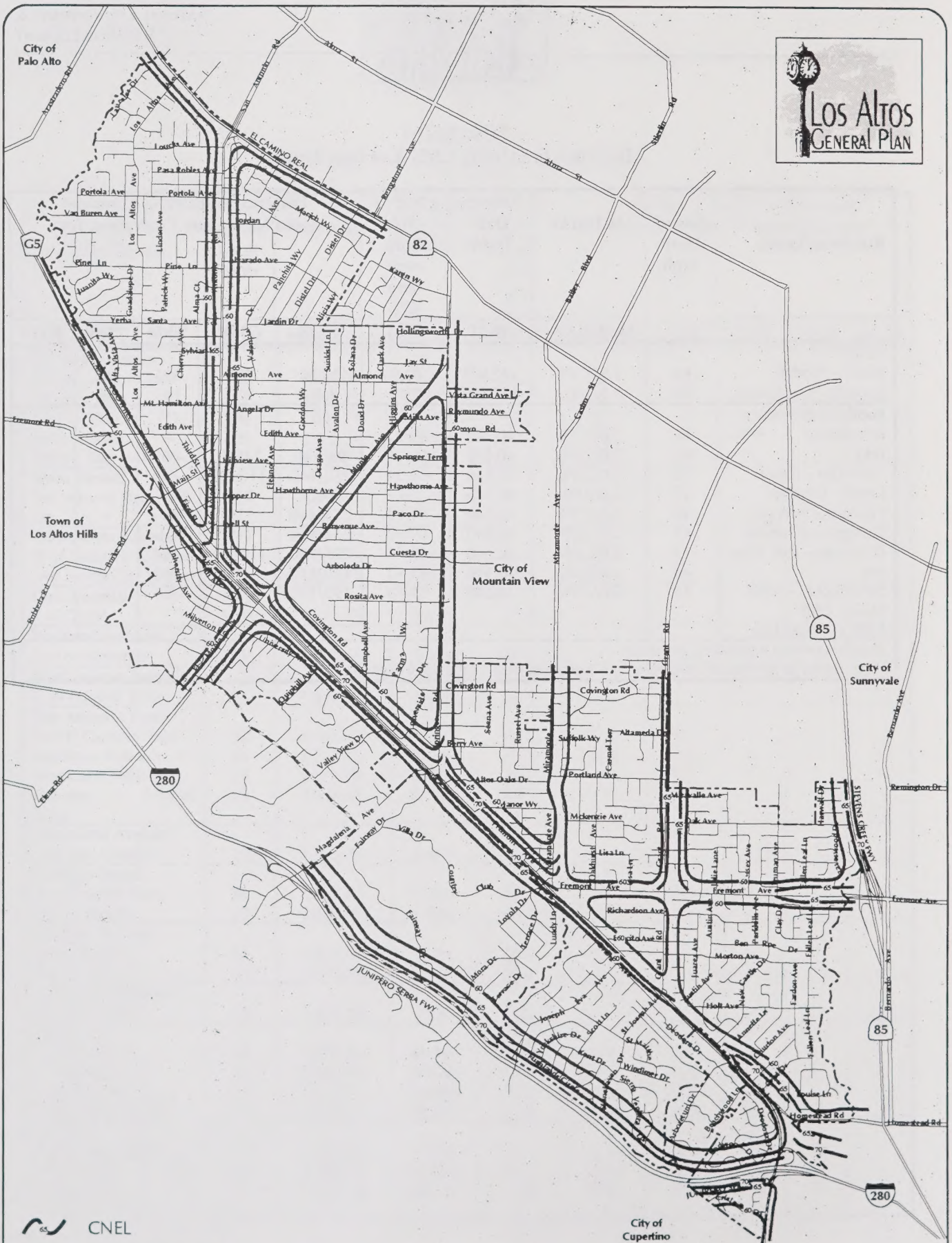
Roadway/Reach	Speed Limit mph	% Trucks	Average Daily Traffic	CNEL @ 50' from near lane C/L	Distance to Existing Contours From Near Lane Centerline, feet				
					60dB	65dB	70dB	75dB	80dB
Los Altos Avenue:									
S of El Camino Real	25	1.8/0.7%	5,240	59.5	-	-	-	-	-
Louck - Pine	25	1.8/0.7%	4,540	59.0	-	-	-	-	-
Pine - Edith	25	1.8/0.7%	5,690	60.0	50	-	-	-	-
Edith - Main	25	1.8/0.7%	6,680	60.5	56	-	-	-	-
Main - San Antonio	25	1.8/0.7%	6,590	60.5	56	-	-	-	-
Main Street:									
Los Altos - San Antonio	25	1.8/0.7%	9,710	62.0	75	-	-	-	-
Miramonte Avenue:									
N of Fremont Avenue	25	1.8/0.7%	11,880	63.0	90	-	-	-	-
S of North City Limits	35	1.8/0.7%	11,610	66.0	155	62	-	-	-
Oak Avenue:									
E of Grant	25	1.8/0.7%	2,650	57.0	-	-	-	-	-
Portland Avenue:									
E of Miramonte	25	1.8/0.7%	3,360	58.0	-	-	-	-	-
Saint Joseph Avenue:									
S. of Foothill Exwy	25	1.8/0.7%	5,380	60.0	50	-	-	-	-
San Antonio Road:									
S of El Camino Real	35	2.0/2.0%	29,150	69.5	278	120	-	-	-
Loucks - Almond	35	2.0/2.0%	29,710	70.0	300	130	50	-	-
Almond - Hillview	35	2.0/2.0%	32,000	70.0	300	130	50	-	-
Hillview - Foothill Exwy	35	2.0/2.0%	20,970	68.5	235	100	-	-	-
Sherwood Avenue:									
E of San Antonio	25	1.8/0.7%	2,460	56.5	-	-	-	-	-
Springer Road:									
N of Foothill Exwy.	30	1.8/0.7%	12,930	65.5	143	56	-	-	-
S of El Monte	30	1.8/0.7%	8,990	64.0	110	-	-	-	-
Truman Avenue:									
N of Fremont	25	1.8/0.7%	4,800	59.5	-	-	-	-	-
S of Fremont	25	1.8/0.7%	380	50.0	-	-	-	-	-
University Avenue:									
W of El Monte	25	1.8/0.7%	3,040	57.5	-	-	-	-	-
SR-82:									
S of El Monte	35	3.5/0.5%	46,500	71.0	340	155	62	-	-
N of El Monte	35	3.5/0.5%	46,500	71.0	340	155	62	-	-
S of San Antonio	35	3.5/0.5%	44,500	71.0	320	143	56	-	-
N of San Antonio	35	3.5/0.5%	49,700	71.0	340	155	62	-	-
SR-85:									
I-280 - Homestead	65	1.6/1.6%	118,000	75.0	600	300	130	50	-
Homestead - Fremont	65	1.6/1.6%	125,000	75.0	600	300	130	50	-
Fremont - SR-82	65	2.5/2.0%	116,000	75.0	600	300	130	50	-



Table NEH-2
Distance to Existing CNEL Contour Lines

Roadway/Reach	Speed Limit mph	% Trucks	Average Daily Traffic	CNEL @ 50' from near lane C/L	Distance to Existing Contours From Near Lane Centerline, feet				
		Med/Heavy	2001	2001	60dB	65dB	70dB	75dB	80dB
I-280:									
SF-85 – Foothill	65	1.9/1.4%	142,000	82.0	1,250	760	395	185	75
Foothill – Magdalena	65	1.9/1.4%	127,000	75.5	640	320	143	56	–
Foothill Expressway:				(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)		
Homestead – Arboretm	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	–	–	–	–	–
	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	95/140	74/90	–/69	–	–
Arboretm – Grant	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/140	110/90	–/69	–	–
Grant – Fremont	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	73	460	215	90/–	–	–
Fremont – Springer	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/460	110	90/–	–	–
Springer – El Monte	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/460	110	90/–	–	–
El Monte – San Antonio	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/140	110/90	–/69	–	–
	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	460/140	–/90	–/69	–	–
San Antonio – Main	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	195/140	–/90	–/69	–	–
Main – Edith									
Edith to Arastadero									

Source: Weiland Associates, Inc. 2001
(1) numbers in this section represent the west/east sides of the road segment.



CNEL

Source: Weiland and Associates.

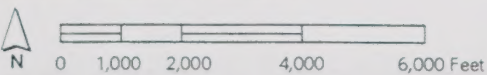


Figure NEH-2
Existing Noise Contours



Table NEH-3
Distance to Future CNEL Contour Lines

Roadway/Reach	Speed Limit mph	% Trucks	Average Daily Traffic	CNEL @ 50' from near lane C/L	Distance to Future Contours From Near Lane Centerline, feet				
		Med/Heavy	2025	2025	60dB	65dB	70dB	75dB	80dB
Almond Avenue:									
E of San Antonio	25	1.8/0.7%	8,920	62.0	75	-	-	-	-
E of Solana	25	1.8/0.7%	7,270	61.0	62	-	-	-	-
Covington Road:									
El Monte - Fremont	25	1.8/0.7%	6,780	60.5	56	-	-	-	-
Riverside - Springer	25	1.8/0.7%	3,020	57.5	-	-	-	-	-
Springer - Spencer	25	1.8/0.7%	5,850	60.0	50	-	-	-	-
Thatcher - Eastwood	25	1.8/0.7%	6,670	60.5	56	-	-	-	-
Cristo Rey Drive:									
Foothill - Friar	35	1.8/0.7%	7,090	64.0	110	-	-	-	-
Cuesta Drive:									
Clark - Springer	25	1.8/0.7%	9,650	62.0	75	-	-	-	-
El Monte - Gabilan	25	1.8/0.7%	6,590	60.5	56	-	-	-	-
Distel Drive:									
ECR - Distel	25	1.8/0.7%	2,230	56.5	-	-	-	-	-
Edith Avenue:									
Third - View	25	1.8/0.7%	8,830	61.5	69	-	-	-	-
El Monte Avenue:									
University - Milverton	25	2.0/2.0%	35,220	69.5	278	120	-	-	-
Giffin - Shirlynn	25	1.8/0.7%	16,580	64.5	120	-	-	-	-
Jay - Almond	25	1.8/0.7%	13,890	63.5	100	-	-	-	-
Fallen Leaf Lane:									
Fremont - Brookmill	25	1.8/0.7%	1,440	54.5	-	-	-	-	-
Fremont - Alexander	25	1.8/0.7%	3,410	58.0	-	-	-	-	-
Homestead - Marshall	25	1.8/0.7%	1,470	55.0	-	-	-	-	-
Fremont Avenue:									
Grant - Lisa	35	1.8/0.7%	10,560	65.5	130	50	-	-	-
Grant - Siesta	35	1.8/0.7%	19,770	68.0	200	83	-	-	-
Fallen Leaf - Stevens Creek	35	1.8/0.7%	26,580	69.5	255	110	-	-	-
Granger Avenue:									
St Joseph - Sandalwood	25	1.8/0.7%	1,570	55.0	-	-	-	-	-
Grant Road:									
Foothill Exwy. - Morton	25	1.8/0.7%	15,970	64.0	110	-	-	-	-
Fremont - Richardson	25	1.8/0.7%	13,430	63.5	100	-	-	-	-
Fremont - Garthwick	35	1.8/0.7%	24,150	69.0	255	110	-	-	-
Covington - Levin	35	1.8/0.7%	27,340	69.5	278	120	-	-	-
Homestead Road:									
S of Grant	35	1.8/0.7%	4,190	62.0	75	-	-	-	-
Fallen Leaf - Stevens Creek	35	1.8/0.7%	16,910	67.5	200	83	-	-	-
Jordan Avenue:									
ECR - Marich	25	1.8/0.7%	3,010	57.5	-	-	-	-	-
Los Altos Avenue:									
ECR - Santa Rita	25	1.8/0.7%	7,220	61.0	62	-	-	-	-
Pine - Spagnoli	25	1.8/0.7%	6,520	60.5	56	-	-	-	-
W. Edith - Mt Hamilton	25	1.8/0.7%	7,050	61.0	62	-	-	-	-



Table NEH-3
Distance to Future CNEL Contour Lines

Roadway/Reach	Speed Limit mph	% Trucks	Average Daily Traffic	CNEL @ 50' from near lane C/L	Distance to Future Contours From Near Lane Centerline, feet				
		Med/Heavy	2025	2025	60dB	65dB	70dB	75dB	80dB
Main Street:									
Foothill Exwy. - First	25	1.8/0.7%	9,710	62.0	75	-	-	-	-
Miramonte Avenue:									
A - B	25	1.8/0.7%	13,540	63.5	100	-	-	-	-
Covington - Alegre	35	1.8/0.7%	13,120	66.5	170	69	-	-	-
Oak Avenue:									
Grant - Braddale	25	1.8/0.7%	2,760	57.0	-	-	-	-	-
Portland Avenue:									
Grant - Carvo	25	1.8/0.7%	4,050	58.5	-	-	-	-	-
Saint Joseph Avenue:									
Deodora - Stonehaven	25	1.8/0.7%	5,490	60.0	50	-	-	-	-
San Antonio Road:									
ECR - Loucks	35	2.0/2.0%	35,970	70.5	320	143	56	-	-
Pine - Arbuelo	35	2.0/2.0%	36,830	70.5	320	143	56	-	-
Edith - Mt. Hamilton	35	2.0/2.0%	39,000	71.0	340	155	62	-	-
Pepper - Hawthorn	35	2.0/2.0%	23,790	69.0	255	110	-	-	-
Sherwood Avenue:									
San Antonio - Acacia	25	1.8/0.7%	2,930	57.5	-	-	-	-	-
Springer Road:									
Berry to Fremont	30	1.8/0.7%	14,620	66.0	155	62	-	-	-
Vista Grande- El Monte	30	1.8/0.7%	10,160	64.5	120	-	-	-	-
Truman Avenue:									
Fremont - Wakefield	25	1.8/0.7%	4,990	59.5	-	-	-	-	-
University Avenue:									
El Monte - Edgewood	25	1.8/0.7%	3,430	58.0	-	-	-	-	-
SR-82:									
S of El Monte	35	3.5/0.5%	52,000	71.5	368	170	69	-	-
N of El Monte	35	3.5/0.5%	52,000	71.5	368	170	69	-	-
S of San Antonio	35	3.5/0.5%	50,000	71.0	340	155	62	-	-
N of San Antonio	35	3.5/0.5%	56,000	71.5	368	170	69	-	-
SR-85:									
I-280 - Homestead	65	1.6/1.6%	130,000	75.5	640	320	143	56	-
Homestead - Fremont	65	1.6/1.6%	137,000	75.5	640	320	143	56	-
Fremont - SR-82	65	2.5/2.0%	128,000	75.5	640	320	143	56	-
I-280:									
SF-85 - Foothill	65	1.9/1.4%	156,000	82.5	1,325	810	428	200	82.5
Foothill - Magdalena	65	1.9/1.4%	139,000	78.0	860	460	215	90	-

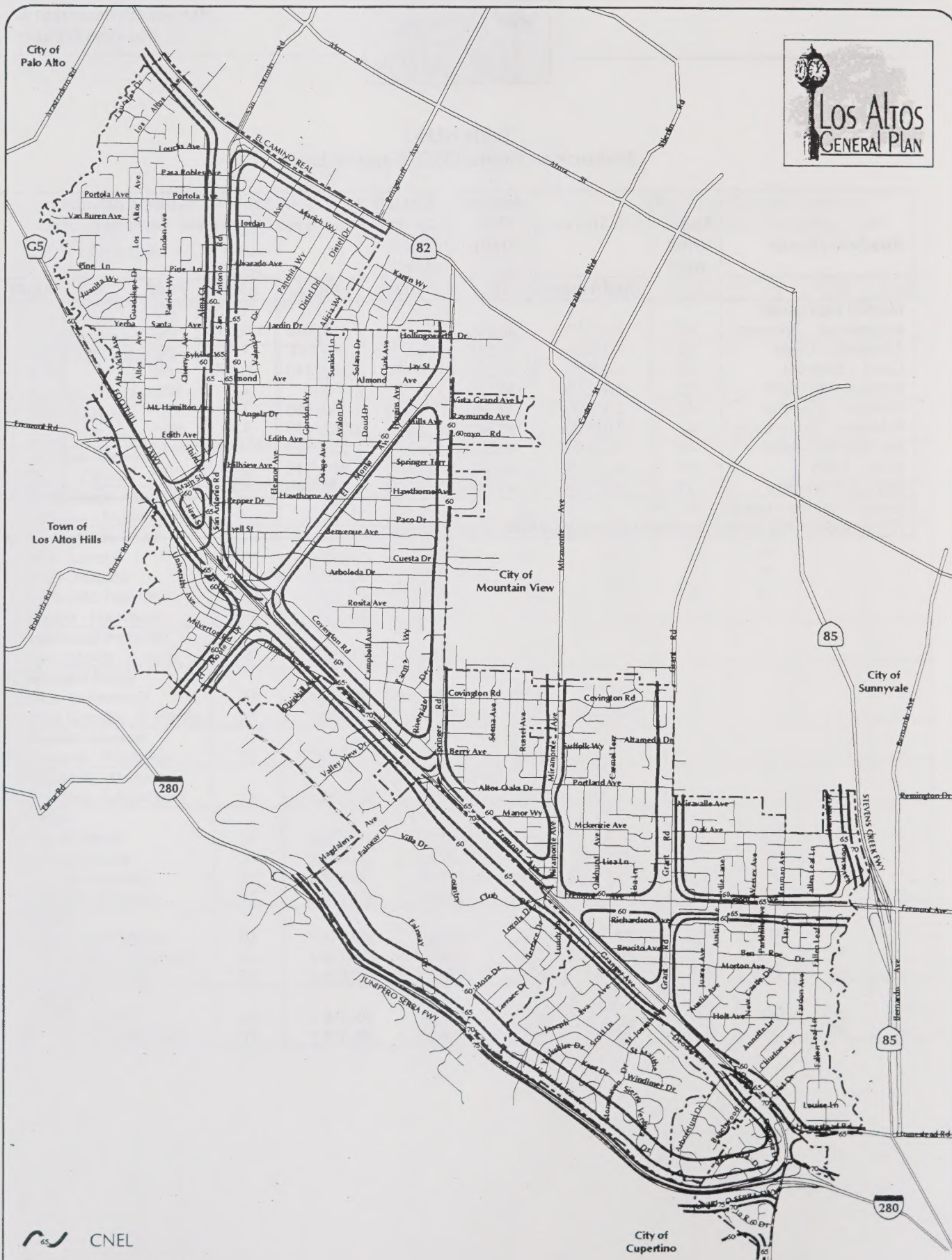


Table NEH-3
Distance to Future CNEL Contour Lines

Roadway/Reach	Speed Limit mph	% Trucks	Average Daily Traffic	CNEL @ 50' from near lane C/L	Distance to Future Contours From Near Lane Centerline, feet				
		Med/Heavy	2025	2025	60dB	65dB	70dB	75dB	80dB
Foothill Expressway:				(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)		
Homestead - Arboretm	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/460	110/215	-/90	-	-
Arboretm - Grant	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	95/140	74/90	-/69	-	-
Grant - Fremont	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/140	110/90	-/69	-	-
Fremont - Springer	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	73	460	215	90/-	-	-
Springer - El Monte	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/460	110	90/-	-	-
El Monte - San Antonio	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/460	110	90/-	-	-
San Antonio - Main	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	255/140	110/90	-/69	-	-
Main - Edith	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	460/140	-/90	-/69	-	-
Edith to Arastadero	45	2.0/2.0%	40,540	69/73	195/140	-/90	-/69	-	-

Source: Weiland Associates, Inc. 2001

(1) numbers in this section represent the west/east sides of the road segment.



NOVEMBER 2002



AIR QUALITY

The City of Los Altos is located within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD). The district is governed by a 21-member Board of Directors, responsible for developing and enforcing regulations to control air pollution. Air pollutants regulated by the district include:

Particulate matter

- ❖ Organic compounds
- ❖ Nitrogen oxides
- ❖ Sulfur dioxide/oxides
- ❖ Carbon monoxide
- ❖ Hydrogen sulfide
- ❖ Photochemical smog
- ❖ Acid deposition

The generation of air pollutants degrade the air quality and can pose a significant health hazard. Air pollutants are closely linked to land use, transportation, and energy use planning. Daily automobile travel from suburban areas to the employment centers of Santa Clara County is the primary cause of air pollution in the subregion. Planning that can reduce the overall vehicle miles traveled (VMT) will also reduce the amount of air pollutants generated. In addition, air movement patterns in the Bay Area carry air pollutants from north to south. The Santa Clara Valley thereby receives the accumulated air pollution from its neighbors to the north.

The Bay Area experienced 12 days of ozone non-attainment in 2000, down from 20 days in 1999. The monitoring station in Mountain View near Los Altos registered seven days of ozone non-attainment in 1999 and the moni-

toring station was out of service in 2000. Unless federal legislation is changed, non-compliance with federal standards means that the Environmental Protection Agency will cease funding for clean-up of air pollution, ban construction of wastewater treatment facilities, and cease highway funding.

Air pollution problems in Los Altos are a result of activities in the entire Bay region and cannot be solved at the local level. However, through appropriate land use, transportation, and energy use planning, the City can participate in the most feasible remedies.

Cooperation among all agencies in the BAAQMD is necessary to achieve desired improvements to air quality. Los Altos can participate and contribute its share in those efforts by proper planning for land use and transportation consistent with the most recent Air Quality Management Plan.





ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Certain natural conditions and human activities in Los Altos create risks to individuals and property within the community. Excessive risk and impact from such hazards can be reduced or avoided through implementation of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element.

Major issues addressed by the goals, policies, and plan of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element are as follows:

- 1) Reducing risk from seismic and geologic hazards;
- 2) Reducing risk from flood hazards;
- 3) Reducing risk from wildland and urban fire hazards;
- 4) Reducing risk associated with hazardous materials;
- 5) Minimizing impacts associated with stationary and transportation-related noise sources;
- 6) Reducing impacts associated with air pollutants;
- 7) Preparing for emergency situations.

Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Natural Environment & Hazards Element.

SEISMIC/GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

Due to its geographic location in a seismically active region, Los Altos is subject to several types of seismic hazards. Los Altos lies between the active San Andreas and Hayward faults, as well as numerous smaller faults. None of the surface traces actually traverse

the Los Altos planning area, but any of the surrounding faults could cause ground shaking, ground rupture, and ground failure (mudslide, landslide, liquefaction) or settlement (subsidence). This risk of exposure can be reduced through appropriate planning, land use designations, development engineering, and building construction practices.

Goal 1: Minimize risks of personal injury and property damage associated with seismic activity, landslides, and other geologic hazards.

Policy 1.1: Update acceptable levels of risk/life safety standards when necessary, and see that buildings are brought up to those standards, consistent with state law.

Policy 1.2: Avoid placement of critical facilities and high occupancy structures in areas known to be prone to ground failure during an earthquake.

Policy 1.3: Require soil analysis and erosion mitigation for all development proposed on sites known to be prone to erosion or ground failure.

FLOOD HAZARDS

The community of Los Altos is subject to periodic flooding hazards. Natural flooding results from overflow along the City's four creeks during major rainstorms. While in the past, creek flooding was addressed through channelization to increase the capacity of the creeks, the City prefers to preserve the natural resources along the creekbeds and use less intrusive methods to minimize flooding hazards. Other flooding related hazards within the City include dam inundation if the Stevens



Creek Dam fails, and potential mud and debris flow during rain storms on the few hillsides within the planning area.

Goal 2: Reduce the potential for flooding along creeks that traverse Los Altos.

Policy 2.1: Work with other jurisdictions to regulate land uses in flood-prone areas and allow development in those areas only with appropriate mitigation.

Policy 2.2: Identify and seek sources of funding to be used toward the prevention of flooding.

Policy 2.3: Continue to discourage concrete lining of creek beds, and encourage the Santa Clara Valley Water District to use environmentally sensitive solutions to control local erosion problems.

FIRE HAZARDS

Within the Los Altos planning area, wildland fire hazards are not a major concern because the developed community with landscaped yard areas creates fire breaks. Rather, fire hazards are concentrated in the urban areas where risk levels should be low.

The Open Space, Conservation, & Community Services Element contains goals and policies sufficient to assure adequate levels of fire protection services.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous materials are used in Los Altos for a variety of purposes including research and development, service industries, small businesses, agriculture, medical clinics, schools and households. Many chemicals used in

household cleaning, construction, dry cleaning, film processing, landscaping and automotive maintenance and repair are considered hazardous. Accidents can occur in the production, use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials. In order to effectively manage hazardous materials and waste, the City implements applicable plans and policies of the Santa Clara County Health Department and Office of Emergency Services.

Goal 3: Protect the community's health, safety, welfare, natural resources, and property through regulation of use, storage, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.

Policy 3.1: Cooperate with and participate in development of the policies and future programs of the Santa Clara County Health Department and the California Legislature.

Policy 3.2: Support the management of hazardous materials contamination and abatement by public and private agencies.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

One of the City's roles is to protect its citizens from potential hazards and reduce the impact of those risks that are unavoidable. The following sections outline goals and policies that, when implemented, will help to protect the community from natural hazards and hazards associated with human activity.

Goal 4: Minimize the risk of hazards to Los Altos residents.

Policy 4.1: Seek to inform the public of areas of risk from hazards.



Major emergencies occur periodically in all communities. Proper preparation for emergencies is an essential action to minimize the disruption, personal injury, and property damage associated with such events. Preventative measures and preparatory responses before an emergency occurs will hasten recovery from these situations. Cooperation with other agencies and jurisdictions is an important factor in preparing for future emergencies.

Goal 5: Minimize risks of personal injury and property damage associated with human activities, such as criminal activity and air and ground transportation.

Policy 5.1: Continue to explore new techniques and approaches in community policing to maintain the safe neighborhood character of the community.

Policy 5.2: Apply design techniques and standards that are aimed at avoiding criminal activity in new development and re-use/revitalization projects.

Policy 5.3: Continue to encourage key emergency personnel to live within the community by allowing the development of mixed-use housing in the Downtown area and along El Camino Real, Foothill Plaza and other appropriate commercial districts.

Policy 5.4: Reduce the risk from air and ground transportation hazards, such as aircraft, rail, truck and roadway systems.

Goal 6: Plan for City and citizen actions in the event of a disaster.

Policy 6.1: Maintain an updated Emergency Preparedness Plan. The plan should increase public awareness of natural hazards and hazards associated with human activity and of methods to avoid or mitigate the effects of these hazards, and should ensure that critical facilities will function during and after a disaster.

Policy 6.2: Maintain communications with other agencies to provide effective emergency services.

Policy 6.3: Cooperate with and encourage the County and neighboring cities to develop and implement a regional Emergency Preparedness Plan.

Policy 6.4: Cooperate with school districts to protect children's safety.

NOISE

Certain areas within Los Altos are subject to high noise levels. The primary noise source impacting Los Altos results from transportation-related activities, especially along major transportation corridors. Other noise sources not related to transportation include construction, business operation, recreational activities, and property maintenance. Consideration of the sources and recipients of noise early in the land use planning and development process can be an effective method of minimizing the impact of noise on people in the community. Consideration may be given to reducing noise in areas already impacted by noise through rehabilitative improvements and enforcement of local noise regulations.



Goal 7: Minimize the amount of noise to which the community is exposed and the amount of noise created by future development and urban activities.

Policy 7.1: Ensure that new development can be made compatible with the noise environment by utilizing noise/land use compatibility standards and the Noise Contours Map as a guide for future planning and development decisions.

Policy 7.2: Enforce the following maximum acceptable noise levels for new construction of various noise-sensitive uses in an existing noise environment.

- ❖ 60 dBA CNEL is the maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure level for single-family residential areas.
- ❖ 65 dBA CNEL is the maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure level for multiple-family residential areas.
- ❖ 70 dBA CNEL is the maximum acceptable outdoor noise exposure level for schools (public and private), libraries, churches, hospitals, nursing homes, parks, commercial, and recreation areas. Excepted from these standards are golf courses, stables, water recreation, and cemeteries.

Policy 7.3: Work to achieve indoor noise levels not exceeding 45 dBA CNEL in the event that outdoor acceptable noise exposure levels cannot be achieved by various noise attenuation mitigation measures.

Policy 7.4: Consider the potential impact on the general noise level when planning changes and improvements to the circulation system.

Policy 7.5: Require reasonable mitigation measures to reduce noise levels to those determined to be acceptable in the event that significant increased noise levels will result from an improvement to the circulation system.

Policy 7.6: Consider noise attenuation measures to reduce noise levels to City-adopted acceptable levels for any development along roadways.

Policy 7.7: Require the inclusion of design features in development and reuse/revitalization projects to reduce the impact of noise on residential development.

Policy 7.8: Require an acoustical analysis for new construction and in areas with a higher than established noise levels.

Policy 7.9: Minimize stationary noise sources and noise emanating from construction activities.

Policy 7.10: Publicize and enforce local noise regulations to reduce nuisance noises related to private developments and residences.



AIR QUALITY

Los Altos is located within the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, which is considered a non-attainment air basin since it exceeds some of the allowable levels for various air pollutants. Cooperation among all agencies in the district is necessary to achieve desired improvements to air quality. Los Altos can participate and contribute its share in those efforts by proper planning for land use and transportation.



Goal 8: Maintain or improve air quality in Los Altos.

- Policy 8.1:** Support the principles of reducing air pollutants through land use, transportation, and energy use planning.
- Policy 8.2:** Encourage transportation modes that minimize contaminant emissions from motor vehicle use.
- Policy 8.3:** Interpret and implement the General Plan to be consistent with the regional Bay Area Air Quality Management Plan, as periodically updated.
- Policy 8.4:** Ensure location and design of development projects so as to conserve air quality and minimize direct and indirect emissions of air contaminants.



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness.

The Implementation Programs Appendix provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and plans for City elected officials, staff and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Programs are to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a measure, procedure, or technique that requires additional City action. This action may either occur on a City-wide basis or in specific areas within the City. The City Council, by relating the Implementation Programs to the General Plan, recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

USE OF THE GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Implementation Programs are intended for use in preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the California Government Code. Because some of the individual actions and programs described in the Implementation Programs Appendix act as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by Section 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This Implementation Programs Appendix may be updated annually with the budget process and whenever the City's



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & HAZARDS

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Natural Environment & Hazards Element. The Natural Environment & Hazards Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Natural Environment & Hazards Element.

SEISMIC/GEOLOGIC HAZARDS

NEH 1: AVOID HAZARDS IN NEW DEVELOPMENT

Assess development proposals for potential seismic/geologic hazards pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Require measures to mitigate all identified significant public safety hazards. In addition, monitor new development for potential hazards to Los Altos residents and request mitigation measures where appropriate.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.2

NEH 2: STRUCTURAL SAFETY STANDARDS

To minimize damage from earthquakes and other geologic activity, implement and enforce the most recent State seismic guidelines and guidelines for other geologic hazards for structural design. Particularly emphasize the integrity of structures for inhabitable structures, critical structures and vital emergency facilities.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1

NEH 3: HAZARDOUS BUILDING IDENTIFICATION

Identify potentially seismically hazardous buildings, defined as "all public and private buildings intended for human habitation, except buildings having less than five dwelling units, constructed prior to enactment of local codes requiring earthquake resistant design and constructed with unreinforced masonry bearing walls", and establish a mitigation program based on the type of use, level of occupancy, and/or type of construction.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.2



NEH 4: SOIL AND GEOLOGIC SURVEYS

During the review of development proposals, require surveys of soil and geologic conditions by a State-licensed engineering geologist where appropriate. The purpose of the surveys is to determine the geologic stability of the site and identify design measures to minimize geologic hazards. Require the project design recommendations as conditions of the project approval.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.3

NEH 5: RESTRICT DEVELOPMENT ON SLOPES

Restrict development on slopes greater than 30 percent.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.3

NEH 6: EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

Promote earthquake preparedness in the community with periodic earthquake awareness programs. The program could include mailing brochures to residences and businesses, press releases, school education programs and presentation to homeowner groups and property managers. Coordinate programs with emergency service providers and the school districts to maximize public participation.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Police
Funding Source:	General Fund, School Districts
Time Frame:	Annual
Related Policies:	4.1

FLOOD HAZARDS

NEH 7: FLOOD CONTROL INSURANCE

Participate in the National Flood Insurance Administration (NFIP) program administered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The NFIA program provides federal flood insurance subsidies and federally financed loans for property owners in flood prone areas. To qualify for federal flood insurance, the City must identify flood hazard areas and implement a system of protective controls. Areas in the planning area prone to flooding have been mapped by FEMA and the City will continue to implement the following land use controls to minimize flooding impacts:

- 1) Floodway. Development is usually prohibited unless encroachment will not obstruct flows or cause increased flood levels.



- 2) Floodway fringe. Development encroachment is permitted if the lowest floor of the structure is one foot above the highest estimated flood elevation.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	Development Fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.2

NEH 8: FLOOD CONTROL SYSTEM

Coordinate with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to ensure regularly scheduled maintenance of flood control channels and completion of necessary repairs.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.1, 2.3

NEH 9: FLOODING EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

In accordance with Section 8589.5 of the California Government Code, maintain emergency procedures for the evacuation and control of populated areas within identified floodplain areas.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1

NEH 10: STORM DRAINAGE MASTER PLAN

Update the Storm Drainage Master Plan by coordinating with Santa Clara Valley Water District to identify flood control deficiencies and necessary improvements.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, development and drainage fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.1, 2.3

NEH11: FLOOD HAZARD AREA REGULATIONS

Continue to control development in the flood hazard areas through implementation of the Flood Hazard Area Regulations Ordinance.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.1, 2.3



NEH 12: WATERCOURSE PROTECTION ORDINANCE

Continue to protect the creeks and creek habitat through implementation of the Watercourse Protection Ordinance. Maintain the special setback provisions along Adobe Creek from Shoup Park to O'Keefe Lane.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development,
Funding Source:	General Fund, Federal and State funds, Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	2.3

NEH 13: EROSION CONTROL

Implement erosion and sediment control measures to reduce soil erosion and volume and velocity of surface runoff from construction sites and large parking lots or other impervious surfaces.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees, mitigation
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.3, 2.3

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

NEH 14: REDUCE RISKS FROM HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Minimize public health and environmental risks from the use, transport, storage and disposal of hazardous materials with the following approaches:

- 1) Cooperating with federal, state, and local agencies to effectively regulate the management of hazardous materials and waste;
- 2) Cooperating with Santa Clara County to implement applicable portions of the County Hazardous Waste Management Plan;
- 3) Establishing defined transportation routes in the planning area for the conveyance of hazardous materials; and
- 4) Developing an emergency response plan for accidents involving hazardous materials.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development, Santa Clara County Environmental Health
Funding Source:	General Fund, Federal and State funds, local regulatory agencies
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	3.1



NEH 15: HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE PROGRAM

Adopt a Household Hazardous Waste Program to protect residents from danger resulting from the use, transportation and disposal of hazardous materials used in the home. The program should include public education about health and environmental hazards of household hazardous materials, and periodic collection campaigns at established sites.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Santa Clara County Environmental Health
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	2002/2003
Related Policies:	3.2

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

NEH 16: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

Prepare and maintain an Emergency Preparedness Plan to maximize the efforts of emergency service providers (e.g., fire, medical and law enforcement) and minimize human suffering and property damage during disasters. The Plan should do the following:

- 1) Identify resources available for emergency response and establish coordinated action plans for specific emergency situations and disasters including earthquake, fire, major rail and roadway accident, flooding, hazardous materials incident, civil disturbance, and chemical, biological, and nuclear attack;
- 2) Identify public shelters where aid and supplies will be available;
- 3) Identify water sources in case of major disruption of water delivery capacity; and
- 4) Involve citizen volunteers in disaster relief activities where feasible.

Responsible Agency/Department:	City Manager, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	2002/2003 and Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.1, 6.3, 6.4

NEH 17: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION

Educate residents and businesses to take appropriate action to safeguard life and property during and immediately after emergencies. Education about emergency preparedness can occur through the distribution of brochures, presentations to civic groups and homeowner associations, and instruction in local schools.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Police, Local School Districts
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.4



NEH 18: COMMUNICATION NETWORK FOR EMERGENCIES

Support a high level of multi-jurisdictional cooperation and communication for emergency planning and management. Solicit private individuals and organizations to enhance service provider communication and response with cellular telephones, ham radios, AM/FM radio and cable television and local school districts.

Responsible Agency/Department:	City Manager, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.2

NEH 19: SECURE EMERGENCY FACILITIES

Ensure that all existing and proposed vital facilities such as hospitals, fire stations and communication stations, are designed and operated to remain functional during a disaster.

Responsible Agency/Department:	City Manager, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.1

NEH 20: FIRST AID TRAINING

Work with school districts to provide training programs in first aid and cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Responsible Agency/Department:	Police, Fire
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	6.4

NOISE

NEH 21: COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT

Use noise and land use compatibility standards to guide future planning and development decisions. Table NEH-2 in the Natural Environment & Hazards Element summarizes the standard for acceptable noise levels by land use types. Review development proposals to ensure that the City's noise standards and compatibility criteria are met. Require mitigation measures, where necessary, to reduce noise levels to meet these standards and criteria.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.1



NEH 22: ACCEPTABLE NOISE LEVELS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Ensure that new development is exposed to acceptable noise levels. Require acoustical analyses for all for all proposed development within the 60 dB CNEL contour as shown on Figure NEH-3, Future Noise Contours in the Natural Environment & Hazards Element. Also require acoustical analyses for selected proposed residential projects in the vicinity of existing and proposed commercial areas that may generate excessive noise. Where the noise analyses indicates that the City's noise standards will be exceeded, require noise control measures to be incorporated into the proposed development to reduce noise to acceptable levels. Noise control measures may include berms, walls, and sound attenuating architectural design and construction methods. Only permit new development if the noise standards and the City's Noise Ordinance can be met.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.2

NEH 23: NOISE INSULATION STANDARDS

Enforce the provisions of the State of California Noise Insulation Standards (Title 24) that specify that indoor noise levels for multi-family residential living spaces shall not exceed 45 dB CNEL. The Title 24 noise standard is defined as the combined effect of all noise sources and is implemented when existing or future exterior noise levels exceed 60 dB CNEL. Figure NEH-3, Future Noise Contours, will be used to determine where exterior noise levels exceed 60 dB CNEL. Title 24 requires that the standard be applied to all new hotels, motels, apartment houses and dwellings other than single-family dwellings. Also apply the standard to single-family dwellings and condominium conversion projects as official policy.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
• Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.3

NEH 24: NOISE ORDINANCE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Implement and enforce the City's Noise Ordinance to protect residents from excessive noise levels.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.10



NEH 25: REDUCE ROADWAY NOISE

Reduce noise impacts from transportation activity to enhance the quality of the community. Incorporate noise control measures, such as sound walls and berms, into roadway improvement projects to mitigate impacts to adjacent development. Request Caltrans and the Santa Clara County Transportation Agencies to provide noise control for roadway projects within the Planning Area. Particularly advocate reducing noise impacts from the list of major noise sources.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund, development fees, gas tax revenues
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.5, 7.6

NEH 26: MINIMIZE VEHICLE, BUS AND TRUCK NOISE

Coordinate with the Police Department, Santa Clara County Sheriffs Department and the California Highway Patrol to enforce the California Vehicle Code pertaining to noise standards for cars, trucks and motorcycles. Periodically review truck and bus routes in the Planning Area for noise impacts to residential and other sensitive land uses. Where noise impacts are identified from truck traffic, modify the designated truck routes to avoid impacts. Where impacts are identified from bus traffic, recommend alternative routes to the Santa Clara County Transportation Authority.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Police
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.5, 7.6

NEH 27: MINIMIZE COMMERCIAL NOISE

Amend the City Noise Ordinance to limit delivery hours for stores with loading areas or docks that front, side, border or gain access on driveways next to residential and other noise sensitive areas. Only approve exceptions if full compliance with the nighttime limits of the noise ordinance is achieved.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.8, 7.9

NEH 28: MINIMIZE CONSTRUCTION NOISE

Require all construction activity to comply with the limits established in the City Noise Ordinance.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	7.9



AIR QUALITY

NEH 29: MINIMIZE IMPACTS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Review development proposals for potential impacts pursuant to CEQA and the BAAQMD Air Quality Handbook. Reduce impacts of new development using available land use and transportation planning techniques such as:

- 1) Incorporation of public transit stops;
- 2) Pedestrian and bicycle linkage to commercial centers, employment centers, schools, and parks;
- 3) Preferential parking for car pools;
- 4) Traffic flow improvements; and
- 5) Employer trip reduction programs.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	8.1, 8.4

NEH 30: PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL AIR QUALITY PROGRAMS

Work with the BAAQMD and ABAG and to meet federal and State air quality standards for all pollutants. To ensure that new measures can be practically enforced in the region, participate in future amendments and updates of the BAAQMP.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, BAAQMD Revenue
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	8.1, 8.2, 8.3

INFRASTRUCTURE AND
WASTE DISPOSAL ELEMENT



INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL ELEMENT



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element	1
Scope and Content of the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element	1
Related Laws, Plans and Programs	1
Relationship to Other General Plan Elements	2

INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL PLAN

Water Supply	3
Water Quality	3
Sewer Service	3
Drainage	3
Utilities	4
Solid Waste Disposal	4
Hazardous Waste Disposal	4

ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Water Supply	5
Sewer Service	5
Drainage	6
Utilities	7
Solid Waste Disposal	7

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX



INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL ELEMENT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

1	General description of the project and its objectives
2	Location and context of the project
3	Project goals and objectives
4	Project organization and management
5	Project risks and mitigation measures

6	Project timeline and milestones
7	Project budget and financial management
8	Project monitoring and evaluation
9	Project communication and public participation
10	Project sustainability and impact assessment

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

11	Project background and justification
12	Project objectives and goals
13	Project scope and boundaries
14	Project risks and mitigation measures
15	Project sustainability and impact assessment

CONCLUSION

INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL ELEMENT



INTRODUCTION

The Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element addresses the community need for water and sewer facilities and services, drainage, utilities, and solid waste disposal. The types and levels of facilities and services provided express the City's response to community desires and needs. The goals, policies, and programs of this chapter serve as guidelines in the ongoing provision of facilities and services.

PURPOSE OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL ELEMENT

The Los Altos Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element is an optional element under California law, rather than a mandatory element of the General Plan. The purpose of the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element is to ensure sufficient quality and levels of service for water, sewer, utilities, and solid waste.

SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL ELEMENT

The Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element is comprised of four sections: 1) Introduction; 2) the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Plan; 3) Issues, Goals and Policies; and 4) Implementation Programs Appendix. The Plan provides background information and explains how the goals and policies will be achieved and implemented. In the Issues, Goals and Policies section, major issues related to the provision of water, sewer, utilities, and solid waste are identified and related goals and policies are established to address these issues. The goals, which are overall statements of community desires, are comprised of broad

statements of purpose and direction. The policies serve as guides for working with local and regional agencies protecting and maintaining these services and facilities at sufficient levels. The General Plan Implementation Programs Appendix identifies specific implementation programs for the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element.

RELATED LAWS, PLANS AND PROGRAMS

A number of existing plans and programs exist which directly relate to the goals of the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element. Enacted through state and local action, these plans and programs are administered by agencies with responsibility for their enforcement.

California Environmental Quality Act

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was adopted by the state legislature in response to a public mandate for a thorough environmental analysis of projects that might adversely affect the environment. The provisions of the law, review procedure and any subsequent analysis are described in the CEQA Statutes and Guidelines as amended in 1998. Water quality and utility and service systems are recognized as environmental impacts under CEQA.

Integrated Waste Management Plan

The California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939) of 1989 changed the focus of solid waste management from landfill to diversion strategies such as source reduction, recycling, and composting. The purpose of the diversion strategies is to reduce dependence on landfills for solid waste disposal. AB 939 required a 25 percent reduction in the solid waste stream by 1995 and a 50 percent



reduction by 2000. Santa Clara County has adopted an Integrated Waste Management Plan to implement these state requirements. Los Altos has achieved these waste reduction goals.

Regional Water Quality Control Board

The federal Clean Water Act requires regional agencies to carry out water quality planning in metropolitan areas, which include control measures for improving water quality and institutional and financial mechanisms to implement the control measures for municipal and industrial wastewater, storm runoff, and similar sources. All permits for liquid waste discharge must be consistent with the plan.

The National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requires permits for point source pollution, such as that from sewage treatment plants, as well as non-point source pollution introduced by water runoff into streams, storm drains, and sewer systems. Although NPDES permitting is the responsibility of the State Water Resources Control Board and the regional boards, the nature of non-point source pollution practically necessitates local participation if pollution runoff is to be minimized.

Watercourse Protection Regulations

Los Altos adopted regulations to protect the City's watercourses by requiring the maintenance of waterways to keep them free of debris, excessive vegetation and other obstacles that have the potential to pollute, contaminate, or significantly retard water flow.

Hazardous Waste Management Plan

The Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Management Plan provides basic policy direction to address current and future hazardous waste management issues.

Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD)

Through its ordinances, the SCVWD seeks to protect surface water quality and groundwater quality.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

According to state planning law, the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element must be consistent with the other General Plan elements. All of the elements are interdependent, as well as interrelated. Certain goals and policies of one element may also address issues that are primary subjects of other elements. This integration of issues throughout the General Plan creates a strong basis for the implementation of plans and programs and achievement of community goals. The Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element is most directly related to the Land Use and Open Space, Conservation & Community Facilities Elements.





INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL PLAN

High quality municipal water and sewer service is necessary to protect public health in urban settings. Ensuring adequate service is essential for creating a healthy and vital environment for residents and businesses within the City. This section of the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element identifies the City's approach to providing those services. The Plan is based on goals and policies identified in the subsequent section of this Element.

WATER SUPPLY

All domestic and commercial water in Los Altos is supplied by the California Water Service Company, and financially supported by user fees. Currently, 28 percent of the City's water comes from well water and 72 percent comes from Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) sources, which include underground aquifers, reservoirs, and the San Joaquin-Sacramento River Delta. The City does not anticipate a significant increase in water demand and the SCVWD has not identified any substantial concerns with water resources.

WATER QUALITY

The General Groundwater Quality Monitoring Program allows the District to evaluate the status of groundwater quality, track changes, and identify areas of concern. Water drawn from underground aquifers may be susceptible to pollutants originating at industrial sites in neighboring cities and transported through the aquifer. The water from these wells is therefore treated and examined periodically to ensure its safety and potability.

The California Water Supply Company's Water Quality Report for the year 2000 identified compliance with all primary standards relative to contaminants and secondary standards relative to taste, odor, and appearance.

SEWER SERVICE

With the exception of a few homes with septic systems, the City's sewer system serves all development within Los Altos, adjacent unincorporated areas within the "urban service area", and a portion of Los Altos Hills. Since 1972, the City has contracted with the City of Palo Alto for sewage treatment at the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant.

The City's contract is for 3.6 million gallons a day (MGD) of treatment, which will accommodate future development of vacant sites and the intensification of commercial areas in accordance with the Land Use Element.

The typical design life of a wastewater facility is 50 years. The Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant was designed in 1969 to serve the wastewater management needs of Palo Alto, Los Altos, Mountain View, East Palo Alto, Los Altos Hills, and Stanford through the year 2020. While the existing plant serves Los Altos for the life of this Plan, the plant is now being planned for a future beyond that period. The City will participate in that plan as a stakeholder.

DRAINAGE

To reduce pollutants in urban runoff, the City requires new development projects and substantial rehabilitation projects to incorporate best management practices (BMPs) pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) and Santa Clara County master Drainage Plan. The city also engages in these practices through activities



such as storm drain maintenance and erosion control.

UTILITIES

Los Altos has adequate utilities for urban development. Natural gas and electricity are provided by Pacific Gas & Electric Company, telephone service is provided by Pacific Bell Telephone, and cable television is provided by AT&T Broadband. New development is required to provide verification of utility service availability at the time of development.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 was enacted to reduce, recycle, and reuse solid waste generated in the state. Specifically, the Act required cities and counties to identify measures to divert 25 percent of the total solid waste stream from landfill disposal by the year 1995 and 50 percent by the year 2000. The state has continued to refine program goals and work toward preserving land resources for productive uses, not landfills.

Los Altos has been able to meet these waste reduction goals by conducting a residential curbside recycling program and participating in applicable programs of the Santa Clara County Integrated Waste Management Program to implement state requirements. Permitting, inspections, and monitoring of solid waste facilities and equipment is performed by the County Solid Waste Local Enforcement Agency. This agency also handles investigations related to illegal storage, dumping, and disposal of solid wastes.

There are no existing or planned solid waste facilities within the Los Altos planning area. Rather, the Los Altos waste stream is col-

lected by a franchised hauler and transferred to Newby Island landfill in San Jose.

HAZARDOUS WASTE DISPOSAL

Hazardous materials are identified in the Natural Environment & Hazards Element of the Plan. Hazardous waste generators and users in the City are required to comply with regulations enforced by several federal, state, and county agencies. The regulations are designed to reduce risk associated with human exposure to hazardous materials and minimize adverse environmental effects.

To ensure that commercial and residential activities involving classified hazardous substances are properly handled, contained, and disposed, the Santa Clara County Fire Department coordinates with the County's Hazardous Materials Compliance Division to implement the Santa Clara County Hazardous Waste Management Plan.





ISSUES, GOALS AND POLICIES

Infrastructure and waste disposal are necessary to support urban development. Quality of life for Los Altos is directly related to how effectively these services are provided.

Five major issues are addressed by the goals, policies, and plan in the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element. These major issues are:

- 1) Preserving and protecting water supply and quality;
- 2) Ensuring an adequate sewer system;
- 3) Providing an adequate drainage system;
- 4) Providing necessary utility systems; and
- 5) Ensuring adequate solid waste disposal.

Each issue and the related goals and policies are included in this section of the Element.

WATER SUPPLY

Los Altos receives all of its water from the California Water Service Company, which operates local wells, but imports the majority of domestic water. With water issues becoming more important throughout California, ensuring that its residents and businesses have access to adequate supplies of high quality water now and in the future is important. Water conservation is important to achieve this objective since conservation reduces the overall need for water by the community.

Goal 1: Support the provision of clean, healthful water in quantities sufficient to satisfy current and projected domestic and commercial needs in Los Altos.

Policy 1.1: Continue to work with California Water Services Company to ensure that the City's drinking water meets all federal and State water quality standards.

Policy 1.2: Ensure that the California Water Services Company meets the demand for water for the population anticipated within the Los Altos water service area, and that adequate pressure levels are maintained.

Policy 1.3: Review development proposals to determine whether adequate water pressure exists for existing and new development.

Policy 1.4: Continue to promote water conservation.

SEWER SERVICE

The Los Altos Sewer System serves Los Altos a portion of Los Altos Hills, and adjacent unincorporated areas with the urban service area. The exception is an unincorporated pocket of about 20 homes which remain on septic systems. The City contracts for sewage treatment at the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant.

Goal 2: Support the provision of sewage collection and treatment services to satisfy current and projected needs in Los Altos.

Policy 2.1: Continue to work with the Palo Alto Regional Water



Quality Control Plant to ensure that adequate sewage treatment capacity is available to meet the needs of development in Los Altos.

Policy 2.2: Review development proposals to ensure that if a project is approved, adequate sewage collection and treatment capacity is available to support such proposals.

DRAINAGE

Surface runoff from Los Altos is discharged into the City storm drainage system and local creeks that empty directly into the South San Francisco Bay. Both State and federal authorities have identified storm water runoff as a major source of pollution adversely affecting the beneficial uses of the Bay. New regulations and permitting processes have been adopted to help reduce sources of pollution that contribute to runoff pollution. The City plays an important role enforcing these regulations to reduce pollution caused by runoff.

Goal 3: Abate non-point source water pollution.

Policy 3.1: Control surface runoff water discharges into the storm water system to comply with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit and the receiving water limitations assigned by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Policy 3.2: Establish non-point source pollution control measures and programs to attempt to reduce and control the discharge of

pollutants into the City's storm drains and local creeks.

Policy 3.3: Minimize the amount of impervious surfaces and directly connected impervious surfaces in areas of new development and redevelopment and where feasible maximize on-site infiltration of storm water runoff.

Policy 3.4: Implement pollution prevention methods supplemented by pollutant source controls and treatment. Use small collection strategies located at, or as close as possible to the source (i.e., the point where water initially meets the ground) to minimize the transport or urban runoff and pollutants offsite.

Policy 3.5: Preserve, and where possible, create or restore areas that provide important water quality benefits, such as riparian corridors, wetlands, and buffer zones.

Policy 3.6: Limit disturbances of natural water bodies and natural drainage systems caused by development including roads, highways, and bridges.

Policy 3.7: Avoid development of areas that are particularly susceptible to erosion and sediment loss; or establish development guidance that identifies these areas and protects them from erosion and sediment loss.



UTILITIES

Since Los Altos is mainly built-out, the infrastructure and utility system is generally complete. The major focus of the City's attention continues to be the on-going maintenance of the existing system and ensuring that improvements are made to meet the current and future needs of the community. The City also continues to review new development proposals to ensure that they provide additional infrastructure when necessary.

Goal 4: Maintain adequate sewer, gas, water, electric power, and communications systems and facilities in Los Altos.

- Policy 4.1:** Continue to work with infrastructure providers to ensure that the community's current and future infrastructure needs are met.
- Policy 4.2:** Maintain accurate records of infrastructure usage and needed infrastructure improvements.
- Policy 4.3:** Continue to require utilities in new developments to be placed underground.
- Policy 4.4:** Continue to investigate the feasibility of undergrounding existing overhead utilities and target areas for undergrounding.
- Policy 4.5:** Allow for the latest in communication technology for Los Altos that can be built in a way that retains the character of the constructed environment.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

Solid and hazardous waste is transported from Los Altos to outside facilities for disposal since there is no appropriate location within the City for a waste disposal site. Due to the limited availability of new waste disposal sites within the region, finding ways to reduce the overall amount of waste generated, and thereby reducing the need for new disposal facilities, is important.

Goal 5: Ensure long term solid waste disposal capacity for Los Altos.

- Policy 5.1:** Continue to explore alternative waste disposal options that are economically sound, operationally dependable, and environmentally acceptable.
- Policy 5.2:** Reduce the total volume of the solid waste stream.
- Policy 5.3:** Pursue waste disposal options in cooperation with neighboring cities.
- Policy 5.4:** Seek citizen input on solid waste disposal issues.



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS APPENDIX

General Plan is amended or updated to ensure continued consistency and usefulness.

The Implementation Programs Appendix provides a guide to implement adopted General Plan policies and plans for City elected officials, staff and the public. The purpose of the Implementation Programs are to ensure the overall direction provided in the General Plan for City growth and development is translated from general terms to specific actions.

Each implementation program is a measure, procedure, or technique that requires additional City action. This action may either occur on a City-wide basis or in specific areas within the City. The City Council, by relating the Implementation Programs to the General Plan, recognizes the importance of long-range planning considerations in day-to-day decision making and budgeting. Implementation of the specific programs will be subject to funding constraints.

USE OF THE GENERAL PLAN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The Implementation Programs are intended for use in preparing the Annual Report to the City Council on the status of the City's progress in implementing the General Plan, as described in Section 65400 of the California Government Code. Because some of the individual actions and programs described in the Implementation Programs Appendix act as mitigation for significant environmental impacts resulting from planned development identified in the General Plan, the annual report can also provide a means of monitoring the application of the mitigation measures as required by Section 15097 of the State CEQA Guidelines. This Implementation Programs Appendix may be updated annually with the budget process and whenever the City's



INFRASTRUCTURE & WASTE DISPOSAL

This Implementation Program provides actions to implement the adopted policies and plans identified in the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element. The Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Implementation Program is a series of actions, procedures and techniques which includes a description of the responsible agency/department, funding source, time frame and related policies in the Infrastructure & Waste Disposal Element.

WATER AND SEWER

IWD 1: WATER AND SEWER SERVICE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

For proposed development projects, require appropriate engineering studies to determine water and sewer infrastructure requirements. Require the recommendations of the studies to be incorporated into the design of projects. Early engineering studies will allow the City and water districts to anticipate water and sewer infrastructure impacts prior to development, and permit more time to plan required improvements. Require the dedication of necessary rights-of-way and construction of water and sewer infrastructure improvements for all development projects.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2

IWD 2: WATER SERVICE LIAISON

Work with the California Water Service Company to anticipate peak water demands and to coordinate public information systems during droughts. Establish liaison to monitor and ensure adequate water pressure levels throughout the City.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, California Water Service Company
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	1.1, 1.2

IWD 3: PROMOTE WATER CONSERVATION

Encourage water conservation in the following ways:

- 1) Encourage the Santa Clara Valley Water District to expand the production of reclaimed water, and work with the districts to develop new uses for reclaimed water;
- 2) Implement the City's Water Efficient Landscape Regulations Ordinance;
- 3) Work with Santa Clara Valley Water District and local school districts to establish water conservation educational programs; and



- 4) Request the incorporation of water conservation devices (including low-flush toilets, flow restriction devices and water conserving appliances) in new development, public projects and rehabilitation projects.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development, Public Works, Santa Clara Valley Water District
Funding Source: General Fund, development fees, local water district
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 1.4

IWD 4: EROSION CONTROL

Implement erosion and sediment control measures to reduce soil erosion and volume and velocity of surface runoff from construction sites.

Responsible Agency/Department: Community Development
Funding Source: General Fund, development fees, mitigation
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 3.7

UTILITIES

IWD 5: MONITOR SEWER CAPACITY

Monitor sanitary sewer capacity and issue a status report to the City Council on an annual basis.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund, User fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 2.1

IWD 6: IMPROVE SURFACE WATER QUALITY

To reduce pollutants in urban runoff, require new development projects and substantial rehabilitation projects to incorporate Best Management Practices pursuant to the National Pollutant System Discharge Elimination System Permit (NPDES) and the Santa Clara County Drainage Master Plan to ensure that the City complies with applicable State and federal regulations.

Responsible Agency/Department: Public Works
Funding Source: General Fund, State and Federal funding sources, development fees
Time Frame: Ongoing
Related Policies: 3.1-3.7



IWD 7: INFRASTRUCTURE BUDGETING

Adopt and update (as needed) a long-range facilities plan and budget to fund maintenance and improvements. Review the plan bi-annually.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, Development fees, User fees
Time Frame:	Annual
Related Policies:	4.1, 4.2

IWD 8: POWER AND COMMUNICATION SERVICE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

Require appropriate studies to be prepared for proposed development projects to determine requirements for natural gas, electricity, telephone and cable infrastructure. Review the recommendations of the studies to be incorporated into the design of projects. Require the dedication of necessary rights-of-way for all development projects.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Community Development, Public Works, Service Providers
Funding Source:	Development fees
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	4.1

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

IWD 9: RECYCLING

Continue and enhance the City's recycling program in accordance with requirements of the State Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939) and the Santa Clara County Integrated Waste Management Plan.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works, Santa Clara County, Association of Bay Area Governments
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	5.1, 5.2

IWD 10: SOLID WASTE TECHNOLOGY

Monitor waste disposal planning activities of neighboring communities and keep abreast of current waste disposal technologies.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	5.3



IWD 11: SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL EDUCATION

Continue to develop and enhance a public awareness program regarding solid waste disposal issues.

Responsible Agency/Department:	Public Works
Funding Source:	General Fund, Franchise fees, solid waste charges
Time Frame:	Ongoing
Related Policies:	5.1, 5.2, 5.4

APPENDICES



GENERAL PLAN GLOSSARY



The following terms are defined to improve understanding of the concepts discussed in the General Plan. They are general in nature and are not intended to provide definitions applicable to ordinances or policies otherwise adopted by the City Council of the City of Los Altos, including but not limited to the Zoning Code or the Subdivision Code. Please refer to the appropriate regulations or policies to determine the precise meanings of terms in those documents

Acceptable Risk: A hazard which is deemed to be a tolerable exposure to danger given the expected benefits to be obtained. Different levels of acceptable risk may be assigned according to the potential danger and the criticalness of the threatened structure. The levels may range from "near zero" for nuclear plants and natural gas transmission lines to "moderate" for open space, ranches, and low-intensity warehouse uses.

Access: A way of approaching or entering a property, including ingress (the right to enter) and egress (the right to leave).

ADT: Average daily trips made by vehicles in a 24-hour period.

Air Basin: A geographical area in California defined as a distinct air basin for the purpose of managing the air resources of the State on a regional basis. An air basin generally has similar meteorological and geographic conditions throughout. The State is currently divided into 15 air basins.

Air Pollution: The presence of contaminants in the air in concentrations that exceed naturally occurring quantities and are undesirable or harmful.

ABAG: Association of Bay Area Governments.

Ambient Noise Level: The overall noise from all sources near and far. In this context, the ambient noise level constitutes the normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location.

Annexation: The incorporation of a land area into an existing city with a resulting change in the boundaries of that city.

Archaeological Site: Land or water areas which show evidence of human, plant or animal activity, usually dating from periods of which only vestiges remain.

Architectural Control: Regulations and procedures requiring the exterior design of structures to be suitable, harmonious, and in keeping with the general appearance, historic character, and/or style of surrounding areas.

Arterial: A major street carrying the traffic of local and collector streets to and from freeways and other major streets, with controlled intersections and generally providing direct access to nonresidential properties.

Assisted Housing: Housing units whose construction, financing, sales prices, or rents have been subsidized by federal, state, or local housing programs.

A-Weighted Decibel (dBA): A numerical method of rating human judgement of loudness. The A-weighted scale reduces the effects of low and high frequencies in order to simulate human hearing.

Automobile-Intensive Use: A use of a retail area which depends on exposure to continuous auto traffic.

Base Flood Elevation: The highest elevation, expressed in feet above sea level, of the level of flood waters expected to occur during a



100-year flood (i.e., a flood that has a one percent likelihood of occurring in any given year).

Bike Lane: A corridor expressly reserved by markings for bicycles, existing on a street or roadway in addition to any lanes for use by motorized vehicles (Class II Bikeway).

Bike Path: A paved route not on a street or roadway, and expressly reserved for bicycles. Bike paths may parallel roads but typically are separated from them by landscaping (Class I Bikeway).

Bike Route: A facility shared with motorists and identified only by signs. A bike route has no pavement markings or lane stripes (Class III Bikeway).

Buffer: An area of land or other provisions intended to enhance compatibility between one type of land use or structure and another. Where a commercial district abuts a residential district, for example, additional use, setback, height, or landscaping restrictions may be imposed to protect residential properties. The term may also be used to describe any zone that separates two unlike zones such as a multifamily housing zone between single-family housing and commercial uses.

Building: Any structure having a roof supported by columns or walls and intended for the shelter, housing, or enclosure of any individual, animal, process, equipment, goods, or materials of any kind or nature.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): A State law requiring State and local agencies to regulate activities with consideration for environmental protection. If a proposed activity has the potential for a significant adverse environmental impact, an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) may be required to be prepared and certified as to its

adequacy before taking action on the proposed project.

Caltrans: California Department of Transportation.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP): A proposed timetable or schedule of all future capital improvements (government acquisition of real property, major construction project, or acquisition of long lasting, expensive equipment) to be carried out during a specific period and listed in order of priority, together with cost estimates and the anticipated means of financing each project. Capital improvement programs are usually projected five or six years in advance and should be updated annually.

Census: The official decennial enumeration of the population conducted by the federal government.

Central Business District (CBD): General guidelines for delineating a downtown area as defined by the U.S. Census of Retail Trade, with specific boundaries being set by the local municipality. The Los Altos CBD boundaries are San Antonio Road, edge of South Parking Plaza, First Street, edge of North Parking Plaza, and West Edith Avenue.

City: City, with a capital "C," generally refers to the government or administration of the City of Los Altos. City, with a lower case "c" may mean any city.

City Council: The elected legislative body for the City of Los Altos.

Collector: A street for traffic moving between arterial and local streets, generally providing direct access to properties.

Commercial: Facilities for the buying and selling of commodities and services. This General Plan has three commercial categories -



Downtown, Neighborhood, and Thoroughfare.

Community Care Facility: Any facility, place, or building which is maintained and operated to provide non-medical residential care, day treatment, adult day care, or foster family agency services for children, adults, or children and adults, including, but not limited to, the physically handicapped, mentally impaired, incompetent persons, and abused or neglected children, and includes residential facilities, adult day care facilities, day treatment facilities, foster family homes, small family homes, social rehabilitation facilities, community treatment facilities, and social day care facilities.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): A grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on a formula basis for entitlement communities, and by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) for non-entitled jurisdictions. This grant allots money to cities and counties for housing rehabilitation and community development, including public facilities and economic development.

Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL): The average equivalent sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of five decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7 PM to 10 PM and after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night after 10 PM, and before 7 AM. See also "A-Weighted Decibel."

Compatibility: The characteristics of different uses or activities that permit them to be located near each other in harmony and without conflict. The designation of permitted and conditionally permitted uses in zoning districts is intended to achieve compatibility within the district. Some elements affecting compatibility include: intensity of occupancy as measured by dwelling units per acre; pe-

destrian or vehicular traffic generated; volume of goods handled; and such environmental effects as noise, vibration, glare, air pollution, or the presence of hazardous materials. On the other hand, many aspects of compatibility are based on personal preference and are much harder to measure quantitatively, at least for regulatory purposes.

Condominium: A building, or group of buildings, in which units are owned individually, and the structure, common areas and facilities are owned by all the owners on a proportional, undivided basis.

Congestion Management Plan (CMP): A mechanism employing growth management techniques, including traffic level of service requirements, development mitigation programs, transportation systems management, and capital improvement programming, for the purpose of controlling and/or reducing the cumulative regional traffic impacts of development. AB 1791, effective August 1, 1990, requires all cities, and counties that include urbanized areas, to adopt and annually update a Congestion Management Plan.

Congregate Care Housing: Generally defined as age segregated housing built specifically for the elderly which provides services to its residents, the minimum of which is usually an on-site meal program, but which may also include housekeeping, social activities, counseling, and transportation. There is generally a minimum health requirement for acceptance into a congregate facility as most do not offer supportive health care services, thus differing from a nursing home. Residents usually have their own bedrooms and share common areas such as living rooms, dining rooms, and kitchens; bathrooms may or may not be shared.

Conservation: The management of natural resources to prevent waste, destruction, or neglect.



Consistent: Free from variation or contradiction. Programs in the General Plan are to be consistent, not contradictory or preferential. State law requires consistency between a general plan and implementation measures such as the zoning ordinance.

Council of Governments (COG): A regional planning and review authority whose membership includes representation from all communities in the designated region. The Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) is an example of a COG for the San Francisco Bay area.

Coverage: The land area covered by all of the structures on a site.

Critical Movement: Any of the through or turning movements at an intersection that determine the allocation of green signal time.

Day-Night Average Level (Ldn): The average equivalent sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of 10 decibels to sound levels in the night after 10 PM and before 7 AM. See also "Community Noise Equivalent Level."

Decibel (dB): A unit for describing the amplitude of sound, as it is heard by the human ear. See also "A-Weighted Decibel," "Community Noise Equivalent Level," and "Day-Night Average Level."

Dedication: The turning over by an owner or developer of private land for public use, and the acceptance of land for such use by the governmental agency having jurisdiction over the public function for which it will be used. Dedications for roads, parks, school sites, or other public uses often are made conditions for approval of a development by a city.

Density: The number of dwelling units per unit of land; usually density is expressed "per gross acre" or "per net acre". Thus, the den-

sity of a development of 100 units occupying 20 acres is 5.0 units per gross acre.

Density Bonus: The allocation of development rights that allow a parcel to accommodate additional dwelling units beyond the maximum for which the parcel is zoned, in exchange for the provision of a certain percentage of those units as affordable.

Destination Retail: Retail businesses that generate a special-purpose trip and which do not necessarily benefit from a high-volume pedestrian location.

Development: The division of a parcel of land into two or more parcels; the construction, reconstruction, conversion, structural alteration, relocation or enlargement of any structure; any mining, excavation, landfill or land disturbance, and any use or extension of the use of land.

Development Impact Fees: A fee or charge imposed on developers to pay for the costs to the City of providing services to a new development.

Development Phasing Program: A program which establishes the requirement that the issuance of building and grading permits shall be phased in a manner that assures implementation of required transportation or other improvements within the City. However, through the CEQA process, the City may tie the phasing of development to improvements outside of the City as mitigation measures/conditions of approval for project-generated traffic impact fees.

Development Plan: A plan, to scale, showing uses and structures proposed for a parcel or multiple parcels of land. It includes lot lines, streets, building sites, public open space, buildings, major landscape features and locations of proposed utility services.



Development Rights: The right to develop land by a land owner who maintains fee-simple ownership over the land or by a party other than the owner who has obtained the rights to develop. Such rights usually are expressed in terms of density allowed under existing zoning. For example, one development right may equal one unit of housing or may equal a specific number of square feet of gross floor area in one or more specified zone districts.

Domestic water; potable water: Water that has undergone adequate treatment and is considered suitable for human drinking and cooking uses.

Dwelling: A structure or portion of a structure designed, occupied, or intended for human habitation purposes.

Dwelling, Multi-Family: A building containing two or more dwelling units for the use of individual families maintaining households; an apartment or condominium building is an example of this dwelling unit type.

Dwelling, Single-Family Attached: A dwelling attached to one or more other dwellings by a common vertical wall; duplexes and townhomes are examples of this dwelling unit type.

Dwelling, Single-Family Detached: A dwelling, not attached to any other dwelling, which is designed for and occupied by not more than one household and is surrounded by open space or yards.

Dwelling Unit: One or more rooms designed, occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping and sanitary facilities provided within the unit.

Easement: A grant of one or more of the property rights by the property owner to

and/or for use by the public, a corporation, or another person or entity.

Economic Base: The production, distribution and consumption of goods and services within a planning area.

Element: A division of the General Plan referring to a topic area for which goals, policies, and programs are defined (e.g., land use, housing, circulation).

Endangered Species: A species of animal or plant is considered to be endangered when its prospects for survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy from one or more causes.

Environment: The sum of all external conditions and influences affecting the life, development and, ultimately, the survival of an organism.

Environmental Impact Report (EIR): A report, as prescribed by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), on the effect of a development proposal and other major actions that significantly affect the environment.

Exaction: A contribution or payment required as an authorized precondition for receiving a development permit; usually refers to mandatory dedication (or fee in lieu of dedication) requirements found in many subdivision regulations.

Expressway: A controlled access roadway, with no access to abutting properties, and access to major streets limited to grade level, signalized intersections or grade-separated interchanges. Foothill Expressway is the only expressway in Los Altos.

Fault: A fracture in the earth's crust forming a boundary between rock masses that have shifted.



Fault, Active: A fault that has moved within the last 11,000 years and which is likely to move again within the next 100 years.

Fault, Inactive: A fault which shows no evidence of movement in the last 11,000 years and no potential for movement in the relatively near future.

Fault, Potentially Active: A fault that last moved within the Quaternary Period (the last 2,000,000 to 11,000 years) before the Holocene Epoch (11,000 years to the present); or a fault which, because it is judged to be capable of ground rupture or shaking, poses an unacceptable risk for a proposed structure.

FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Fire Flow: A rate of water flow that should be maintained to halt and reverse the spread of a fire.

Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM): For each community, the official map on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated areas of special flood hazard and the risk premium zones applicable to that community.

Flood Plain: A lowland or relatively flat area adjoining the banks of a river or stream which is subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year (i.e., 100-year flood).

Flood, Regulatory Base: Flood having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year (100-year flood).

Floodway: The channel of a watercourse or river, and portions of the flood plain adjoining the channel, which are reasonably required to carry and discharge the base flood of the channel.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR): The ratio of the gross floor area of all buildings on a site divided by the site area; usually expressed as a numerical value (e.g., a building having 5,000 square feet of gross floor area located on a lot of 10,000 square feet in area has a floor area ratio of .5:1, sometimes also designated as a FAR of 0.5).

Freeway: High-speed, high-capacity, limited-access transportation facility serving regional and county-wide travel. Generally used for long trips between major land use generators. Major streets cross at a different grade-level. State Route 85 and Interstate 280 are freeways.

Gateway: A point along a roadway entering the city at which a motorist gains a sense of having left the environs and of having entered the city.

General Plan: A legal document which takes the form of a map and accompanying text adopted by the local legislative body. The plan is a compendium of policies regarding the long-term development of a jurisdiction. The state requires the preparation of seven elements or divisions as part of the plan: land use, housing, circulation, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Additional elements pertaining to the unique needs of an agency are permitted.

Goal: The ultimate purpose of an effort stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable; a broad statement of intended direction and purpose (e.g., "A balance of land use types within the city").

Grade: The degree of rise or descent of a sloping surface.

Greenbelt: An open area which may be cultivated or maintained in a natural state surrounding development or used as a buffer



between land uses or to mark the edge of an urban or developed area.

Ground Failure: Mudslide, landslide, liquefaction or the compaction of soils due to ground shaking from an earthquake.

Ground Shaking: Ground movement resulting from the transmission of seismic waves during an earthquake.

Groundwater: The supply of fresh water under the ground surface in an aquifer or soil that forms a natural reservoir.

Group Quarters: A facility that houses groups of unrelated persons not living in households (U.S. Census definition). Examples of group quarters include institutions, dormitories, shelters, military quarters, assisted living facilities and other quarters, including single-room occupancy (SRO) housing, where 10 or more unrelated individuals are housed.

Growth Management: Techniques used by government to control the rate, amount and type of development.

Habitat: The physical location or type of environment in which an organism or biological population lives or occurs.

Handicapped (disabled): A person determined to have a mobility impairment or mental disorder expected to be of long or indefinite duration. Many such impairments or disorders are of such a nature that a person's ability to live independently can be improved by appropriate housing conditions.

Hardscape: Decorative elements that may be combined with landscaping. Hardscape elements include, but are not necessarily limited to, natural features such as rock and stone; and structural features such as fountains, reflecting pools, swimming pools, art works,

screens, walls, fences, benches, and crushed granite.

HCD: State Department of Housing and Community Development.

Hazardous Materials: An injurious substance, including pesticides, herbicides, toxic metals and chemicals, liquefied natural gas, explosives, volatile chemicals and nuclear fuels.

Historic Area: A district, zone or site designated by local, state or federal authorities within which buildings, structures and places are of basic and vital importance due to their association with history, or their unique architectural style and scale, and therefore should be preserved and/or developed in accord with a fixed plan.

Household: According to the Census, a household is all persons living in a dwelling unit whether or not they are related. Both a single person living in an apartment and a family living in a house are considered households.

Household Income: The total income of all the people living in a household. Households are usually described as very low income, low income, moderate income, and upper income for that household size, based on their position relative to the county median income.

Housing Affordability: Based on State and Federal standards, housing is affordable when the housing costs are no more than 30 percent of household income.

Housing Payment: For ownership housing, this is defined as the mortgage payment, property taxes, and insurance and utilities. For rental housing this is defined as rent and utilities.

HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



Human Services: The programs which are provided by the local, state, or federal government to meet the health, welfare, recreational, cultural, educational, and other special needs of its residents.

Impervious Surface: Surface through which water cannot penetrate, such as roof, road, sidewalk, and paved parking lot. The amount of impervious surface increases with development and establishes the need for drainage facilities to carry the increased runoff.

Implementation Program: An action, procedure, program, or technique that carries out General Plan policy.

Income Categories: Four categories for classifying households according to income based on the median income for each county. The categories are as follows: Very Low (0-50% of county median); Low (50-80% of county median); Moderate (80-120% of county median); and Upper (over 120% of county median).

Infill Development: Development of vacant land (usually individual lots or left-over properties) within areas which are already largely developed.

Infrastructure: The physical systems and services which support development and population, such as roadways, railroads, water, sewer, natural gas, electrical generation and transmission, telephone, cable television, storm drainage, and others.

Intensity: A measure of the amount or level of development often expressed as the ratio of building floor area to lot area (floor area ratio) for commercial, business, and industrial development, or dwelling units per acre of land for residential development (density).

Intersection: Where two or more roads cross at grade.

Issue: A problem, constraint, or opportunity that becomes the basis for community action.

Jobs/Housing Balance; Jobs/Housing Ratio: The jobs/housing ratio divides the number of jobs in an area by the number of housing units. A ratio of 1:1 (1.0) means that a community has an equal number of jobs as housing. A ratio greater than 1.0 typically indicates a net in-commute of employed persons; less than 1.0 a net out-commute of employed persons. However, in communities with an average of more than one wage earner per household, a ratio of 1.5 or 1.75 may be considered balanced.

Landscaping: Planting, including, but not limited to, trees, shrubs, and ground covers, suitably designed, selected, installed, and maintained to enhance a site or right-of-way.

Land Use: A description of how land is occupied or used.

Land Use Plan: A plan showing the existing and proposed location, extent and intensity of development of land to be used in the future for varying types of residential, commercial, recreational and other public and private purposes or combination of purposes.

Landslide: A general term for a falling or sliding mass of soil or rocks.

LIHPRHA: Low Income Housing Preservation and Resident Homeownership.

Liquefaction: A process by which water-saturated granular soils transform from a solid to a liquid state due to groundshaking. This phenomenon usually results from shaking from energy waves released in an earthquake.

Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO): A five or seven-member commission within each county that reviews and evaluates all proposals for formation of spe-



cial districts, incorporation of cities, annexation to special districts or cities, consolidation of districts, and merger of districts with cities. Each county's LAFCO is empowered to approve, disapprove, or conditionally approve such proposals.

Local Street: A street providing direct access to properties and designed to discourage through-traffic.

Lot: A parcel or area of land established by plat, subdivision, or as otherwise permitted by law, to be used, developed or built upon, including the building site and all required yards and open spaces.

LOS: Level of Service of roadway and intersection operations. Level of Service is rated on a scale of A (best) to F (worst), based on criteria such as percent of roadway capacity used and waiting times at intersections.

Manufactured Housing: Residential structures that are constructed entirely in the factory, and which since June 15, 1976, have been regulated by the federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 under the administration of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Median Income: The annual income for each household size that is defined annually by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development. Half of the households in the region have incomes above the median and half are below.

Mitigate: To ameliorate, alleviate, or avoid to the extent reasonably feasible.

Mixed Use: Properties on which various uses, such as office, commercial, institutional, and residential, are combined in a single building.

Mobile Home: A structure, transportable in one or more sections, at least eight feet in width and 32 feet in length, built on a permanent chassis, and designed to be used as a dwelling unit, with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities.

Modular Unit: A factory-fabricated, transportable building or major component designed for use by itself or for incorporation with similar units into a structure for residential, commercial, or educational use. Differs from mobile homes and manufactured housing by (in addition to lacking an integral chassis or permanent hitch to allow future movement) being subject to California housing law design standards. California standards are more restrictive than federal standards in some respects (e.g., plumbing and energy conservation). Also called Factory-built Housing and regulated by State law of that title.

National Flood Insurance Program: A federal program that authorizes the sale of federally subsidized flood insurance in communities where such flood insurance is not available privately.

Noise: Any undesired audible sound.

Noise Exposure Contours: Lines drawn about a noise source indicating constant energy levels of noise exposure. CNEL and Ldn are the metrics utilized to describe community noise exposure.

Non-Conforming Use: A use that was valid when brought into existence, but which by subsequent regulation no longer conforms to the use regulations for the district in which such use is located. "Non-conforming use" is a generic term and may also include (1) non-conforming buildings (by virtue of size, type of construction, location on land, or proximity to other structures), (2) non-conforming use of a conforming building,



(3) non-conforming use of a non-conforming building, and (4) non-conforming use of land. Thus, any use lawfully existing on a piece of property that is inconsistent with a new or amended General Plan, and that is a violation of a zoning ordinance amendment subsequently adopted in conformance with the General Plan, will be a non-conforming use.

Non-Domestic Water: Water consisting of, but not limited to, a combination of treated wastewater and intercepted surface stream flow, supplemented by other waters including potable water.

NPDES: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System.

Open Space: Any parcel or area of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, designated, dedicated or reserved for public or private use or enjoyment.

Ordinance: A law or regulation set forth and adopted by a governmental authority, usually a city or county.

Overcrowding: As defined by the Census, a household with greater than 1.01 persons per room, excluding bathrooms, kitchens, hallways, and porches.

Parcel: A lot or tract of land.

Planning and Research, Office of (OPR): A governmental division of the State of California which has among its responsibilities the preparation of a set of guidelines for use by local jurisdictions in drafting General Plans.

Planning Area: The planning area is the land area addressed by the General Plan. The planning area boundary may coincide with the Sphere of Influence, which encompasses land both within the City limits and potentially annexable land, or may encompass land both within the City limits and in the surrounding

area that relates to the City's long-range planning.

Planning Commission: A body, usually having five or seven members, created by a city or county in compliance with California law (Section 65100) which requires the assignment of the planning functions of the city or county to a planning department, planning commission, hearing officers, and/or the legislative body itself, as deemed appropriate by the legislative body.

Policy: Statements guiding action and implying clear commitment found within each element of the General Plan (e.g., "Provide incentives to assist in the development of affordable housing").

Pollution: The presence of matter or energy whose nature, location, or quantity produces undesired environmental effects.

Program: A coordinated set of specific measures and actions (e.g., zoning, subdivision procedures, and capital expenditures) the local government intends to use in carrying out the policies of the General Plan.

Recreation, Active: A type of recreation or activity that requires the use of organized play areas including, but not limited to, softball, baseball, football and soccer fields, tennis and basketball courts and various forms of children's play equipment.

Recreation, Passive: Type of recreation or activity that does not require the use of organized play areas.

Redevelopment: A process in which existing development and use of land is replaced with newer development and/or use.

Regional: Pertaining to activities or economies at a scale greater than that of a single



jurisdiction, and affecting a broad homogeneous area.

Regulation: A rule or order prescribed for managing government.

Rehabilitation: The upgrading of a building in previously dilapidated or substandard condition, for human habitation or use.

Residential: Land designated by the City's General Plan and zoning ordinance for buildings consisting only of dwelling units. May be vacant or unimproved.

Restoration: The replication or reconstruction of a building's original architectural features, usually describing the technique of preserving historic buildings.

Retrofit: To add materials and/or devices to an existing building or system to improve its operation, safety, or efficiency. Buildings have been retrofitted to use solar energy and to strengthen their ability to withstand earthquakes, for example.

Rezoning: An amendment to the map and/or text of a zoning ordinance to effect a change in the nature, density, or intensity of uses allowed in a zoning district and/or on a designated parcel or land area.

Right-of-Way: A strip of land acquired by reservation, dedication, prescription or condemnation and intended to be occupied or currently occupied by a road, crosswalk, railroad, electric transmission lines, oil or gas pipeline, water line, sanitary or storm sewer, or other similar uses.

Risk: The danger or degree of hazard or potential loss.

Sanitary Landfill: The controlled placement of refuse within a limited area, followed by compaction and covering with a suitable thickness

thickness of earth and other containment material.

Seismic: Caused by or subject to earthquakes or earth vibrations.

Sensitive Species: Includes those plant and animal species considered threatened or endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or the California Department of Fish and Game according to Section 3 of the Federal Endangered Species Act. Endangered - any species in danger of extinction throughout all, or a significant portion of, its range. Threatened - a species likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all, or a portion of, its range. These species are periodically listed in the Federal Register and are, therefore, referred to as "federally listed" species.

Septic System: A sewage-treatment system that includes a settling tank through which liquid sewage flows and in which solid sewage settles and is decomposed by bacteria in the absence of oxygen. Septic systems are often used for individual-home waste disposal where an urban sewer system is not available.

Sewer: Any pipe or conduit used to collect and carry away wastewater from the generating source to a treatment plant or discharge outfall.

Site: A parcel of land used or intended for one use or a group of uses and having frontage on a public or an approved private street.

Site Area, Gross: The total horizontal area within the property lines of a site.

Site Area, Net: The portion of a site that can potentially be built upon. The following generally are not included in the net acreage of a site: public or private road rights-of-way, public open space, and easements.



Site Plan: The development plan for one or more lots on which is shown the existing and proposed conditions of the lot including: topography, vegetation, drainage, flood plains, marshes and waterways; open spaces, walkways, means of ingress and egress, utility services, landscaping, structures and signs, lighting, and screening devices; any other information that reasonably may be required in order that an informed decision can be made by the approving authority.

Slope: Land gradient described as the vertical rise divided by the horizontal run, and expressed in percent.

Solar Access: A property owner's right to have the sunlight shine on his/her land.

Solid Waste: Unwanted or discarded material, including garbage with insufficient liquid content to be free flowing, generally disposed of in land fills or incinerated.

Special Needs Groups: Those segments of the population which have a more difficult time finding decent affordable housing due to special circumstances. Under State planning law, these special needs groups consist of the elderly, handicapped, large families, single-parent households, farmworkers and the homeless.

Specific Plan: Under Article 8 of the Government Code (Section 65450 et seq), a legal tool for detailed design and implementation of a defined portion of the area covered by a General Plan. A specific plan may include all detailed regulations, conditions, programs, and/or proposed legislation which may be necessary or convenient for the systematic implementation of any General Plan element(s).

Sphere of Influence: The probable ultimate physical boundaries and service area of a local agency (city or district) as determined by

the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) of the County.

Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA): A county or group of contiguous counties which contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more, or twin cities of a combined population of at least 50,000.

Standards: (1) A rule or measure establishing a level of quality or quantity that must be complied with or satisfied. The California Government Code (Section 65302) requires that General Plans describe "standards". Examples of standards might include the number of acres of parkland per 1,000 population that the community will attempt to acquire and improve. (2) Requirements in a zoning ordinance that govern building and development as distinguished from use restrictions; for example, site-design regulations such as lot area, height limit, frontage, landscaping, and floor area ratio.

Stationary Source: A non-mobile emitter of pollution.

Street Furniture: Those features associated with a street that are intended to enhance the street's physical character and use by pedestrians, such as benches, trash receptacles, kiosks, lights, newspaper racks, etc.

Structure: Anything constructed or erected that requires location on the ground (excluding swimming pools, fences, and walls used as fences).

Subdivision: The division of a lot, tract or parcel of land for the purpose of sale, whether immediate or in the future.

Subdivision Map Act: Division 2 (Sections 66410 et seq) of the California Government Code, which vests in local legislative bodies the regulation and control of the design and improvement of subdivisions, including the



requirement for tentative and final maps. (See "Subdivision.")

Subsidence: The sudden sinking or gradual downward settling and compaction of soil and other surface material with little or no horizontal motion. Subsidence may be caused by a variety of human and natural activities, including earthquakes.

Subsidize: To assist by payment of a sum of money or by the granting of terms or favors that reduce the need for monetary expenditures. Housing subsidies may take the forms of mortgage interest deductions or tax credits from federal and/or state income taxes, sale or lease at less than market value of land to be used for the construction of housing, payments to supplement a minimum affordable rent, and the like.

Traffic Calming: Reducing motorist speed, decreasing vehicle volumes, and increasing safety for pedestrians and nonmotorized vehicles.

Transit: The conveyance of persons or goods from one place to another by means of a local, public transportation system.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM): A strategy for reducing demand on the road system by reducing the number of vehicles using the roadways and/or increasing the number of persons per vehicle. TDM attempts to reduce the number of persons who drive alone on the roadway during the commute period and to increase the number in carpools, vanpools, buses and trains, walking, and biking. TDM can be an element of TSM (see below).

Transportation Systems Management (TSM): Individual actions or comprehensive plans to reduce the number of vehicular trips generated by or attracted to new or existing development. TSM measures attempt to reduce

the number of vehicle trips by increasing bicycle or pedestrian trips or by expanding the use of bus, transit, carpool, vanpool, or other high occupancy vehicles.

Trip: A one-way journey that proceeds from an origin to a destination via a single mode of transportation; the smallest unit of movement considered in transportation studies. Each trip has one "production end," (or origin - often from home, but not always), and one "attraction end" (destination).

Trip-Generation Rate: The number of vehicle trips per acre, per 1,000 square feet of floor area, per housing unit or other unit of measure during a 24-hour period. Measured trip-generation rates are used to project the impact of development on the traffic-circulation system.

Uniform Building Code (UBC): A standard building code that sets forth minimum standards for construction.

Units At-Risk of Conversion: Housing units that are currently restricted to low-income housing use and will become unrestricted and possibly be lost as low-income housing.

Water Course: Any natural or artificial stream, river, creek, ditch, channel, canal, conduit, culvert, drain, waterway, gully, ravine or wash in which water flows in a definite channel, bed and banks, and includes any area adjacent thereto subject to inundation by reason of overflow or flood water.

Wetland: An area that is inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation.

Zoning: A police power measure, enacted primarily by units of local government, in



which the community is divided into districts or zones within which permitted and special uses are established as are regulations governing lot size, building bulk, placement, and other development standards. Requirements vary from district to district, but they must be uniform within the same district. The zoning ordinance consists of a map and text.

Zoning District: A geographical area of a city zoned with uniform regulations and requirements.

Zoning Map: The officially adopted zoning map of the city specifying the location of zoning districts within all geographic areas of the city.

City of Los Altos Transportation Charrette

September 8, 2014

APPENDIX B: CITY OF LOS ALTOS TRANSPORTATION CHARRETTE

APPENDIX B:
CITY OF LOS ALTOS TRANSPORTATION
CHARACTERISTICS

City of Los Altos Transportation Charrette

September 6, 2001

Community Concerns

Street Design Guidelines

Transport System
Recommendations

Sample Projects

Recommended
Funding Sources

Appendix



This report was prepared for the City of Los Altos, California, by Walkable Communities, Inc. For background information on details found in this report contact Dan Burden, Director. Walkable Communities, Inc. provides more information at website: www.walkable.org

Disclaimer

The contents of this report represent the knowledge, experience, and expertise of the citizens and authors in providing ideas and concepts to improve safety, access, mobility and livability through streetscaping, transit, walking, bicycling enhancements and other traffic management strategies. This report does not constitute a standard, specification, or regulation, and is not intended to be used as a basis for establishing civil liability. The decision to use any particular measure should be made on the basis of engineering studies of the location. This report is not a substitute for sound engineering judgment. Adherence to the principles found in this report can lead to an overall improvement in neighborhood and community livability and traffic

Table of Contents

Community Concerns	4
A review of the community visioning process and the concerns raised through a Visual Preference Survey, Focus Groups, Community Meetings, Walking Audits, and Design Tables.	
Street Design Guidelines	9
A description of palliative street elements that should be used to enhance the walkability and livability of the community, while preserving its rustic character.	
Transport System Recommendations	17
Specific recommendations that should be considered for inclusion in the Transportation section of the General Plan.	
Sample Projects	25
Nine specific projects that show how enhancements could be implemented.	
Recommended Funding Sources	30
An overview of Federal, State and Local funds that might be available to assist implementation.	
Appendix	36
Minutes of all Focus Group Sessions	
Plan View of Key Change	
Visual Preferences Survey	



Los Altos Community Values:

- *Quiet/Tranquil*
- *Friendly*
- *Safety*
- *Rural/Small*
- *Family*
- *Trees*
- *Beauty*

Community Concerns

Community concerns were elicited through a series of workshops starting on Thursday evening. After some introductory remarks, Dan Burden conducted a Visual Priorities Survey. This survey appears in the appendix of this report.

Six focus groups were conducted on Friday, with representatives from City Staff, City Officials, Public Services and Emergency Responders, Schools, Community and Civic Groups, and Business and Real Estate leaders. The input received was invaluable in steering the consultant team towards the most crucial concerns of the community. Many important questions were raised. These included:

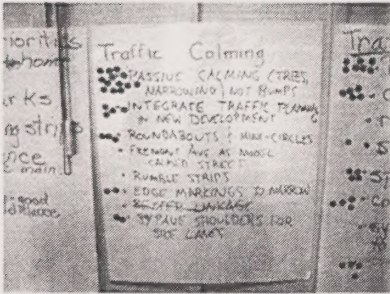
- How can the community retain the rural/rustic quality of Los Altos?
- Should more sidewalks be constructed? If so, where?
- How can the pluses and minuses of various options be considered?
- Can unrealistic expectations be avoided?
- How can transportation, parking, walkability, and affordable housing be incorporated into the General Plan?
- How can the streets made safe for children to walk to school?
- How can traffic be reduced, slowed, and made safer?
- Where can downtown workers find all-day parking?

The photo below shows one of the focus groups. The other photo captures the group effort to define community values.



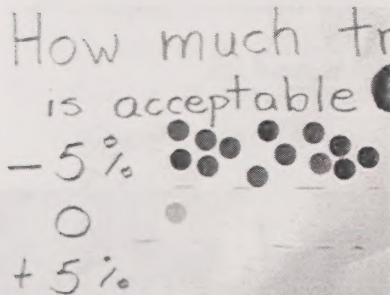


At the Friday evening Community Values session, residents were polled regarding the values they hold for Los Altos. Of the many possibilities that were volunteered, seven were the most popular. "Quiet/tranquil," "Friendly," and "Safety" ranked the highest. These were followed by "Rural/Small," "Family/youth/elderly," "Trees," and "Beauty." The community values expressed helped shape the recommendations in this report.



After the exercise on values was a prioritizing of various possible improvements that fell under a number of categories. Four suggestions for Collector streets were most popular: making collectors not wide and straight, growing of tree canopies, enforcement/conversion to 25 m.p.h. speed limit, and the use of environmentally friendly buses. Traffic calming was also a priority, in particular the use of such passive traffic calming techniques as the narrowing of lanes and landscaping. The concern for safety emerged in the desire for more sidewalks near schools, safer crosswalks, and better visibility at intersections. Desirable trip reduction techniques included bringing back school buses, regional trail links, and neighborhood links connecting cul de sacs. Citizens wanted to retain rural character by planting more, bigger trees and by changing the environment to allow children to safely walk to school.

The photos above and below show more of the community involvement effort. Above, residents indicate their support for various recommendations. Below shows the strong preference for decreasing traffic. The bottom photo shows the Design Tables that were conducted Saturday after the Walking Audit.



On Saturday the consultant team lead two groups on Walking Audits. One group walked from City Hall around the downtown and into an adjoining neighborhood. The other group walked in the vicinity of Oak School. That afternoon, the consultant team set up a number of Design Tables. The participants were invited to indicate on maps where they would like sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and connections to be located. They also marked intersections that need improvements and indicated the streets most in need of traffic calming projects.

Intersections suggested for improvement included:

- San Antonio and West Edith
- San Antonio and Whitney/Pepper
- El Monte and Springer
- El Monte and Hawthorne
- El Monte and Foothill
- Foothill, Springer, Magdalena
- Foothill, Fremont, Mira Monte (at Loyola Corners), Loyola Corners (bridge)
- Foothill and Arboretum
- Rancho area including Barry and Springer





This intersection illustrates the conflict between motorized and non-motorized traffic on Los Altos streets. When asked, the father said that the walkway was too rough for the stroller and was discontinuous. Therefore he felt more comfortable walking in the street, despite the danger.

Participants suggested a number of sites to consider for traffic calming measures, including:

- Routes to schools and commuter traffic cut-through areas
- W. Portola Avenue near Egan Elementary School
- Los Altos Avenue near Santa Rita Elementary
- Los Altos Avenue near Toyon
- University Avenue from Main Street to Anita
- Almond near Los Altos High School
- Almond near Almond Elementary
- Higgins Avenue
- El Monte at Almond
- El Monte at Clark
- El Monte at Rinconada Court
- Hawthorne from Eleanor to El Monte
- El Monte and Hawthorne
- Clark, El Monte to Cuesta
- Springer at Cuesta
- Covington, from Springer to Miramonte
- Covington at Miramonte
- Covington near Blach Elementary
- Barry near Loyola Elementary
- Grant and Oak
- Oak Avenue at Oak Elementary
- Truman between Oak and Freemont
- Newcastle between Freemont and Grant Road
- Grant near St. Simon's School
- St. Joseph Avenue near Mt. Claire School
- Fallen Leaf from Freemont to Homestead Rd
- Homestead near Foothill

The photo at right is Hawthorne Avenue, looking east from Gordon. The photo below is an aerial view of Hawthorne (running across the center from left to right) and El Monte (running diagonally from the lower left.) Both Hawthorne and El Monte were identified as roadways needing attention.



Sidewalk Priorities:

- *Around schools*
- *Commercial Areas*
- *Along collector corridors with heavy traffic*

Neighborhood Links:

- *To schools*
- *To cul-de-sacs*
- *To adjacent towns*

Bicycling Priorities:

- *Connect schools*
- *Connect downtown*
- *Along Permanente Creek*

Suggested sidewalk priorities were:

- Around schools: provide sidewalks on the main streets leading to all of them.
 - Busiest streets expanded to create a system of networked sidewalks.
 - Along main roads: those walking for transportation need the same corridors cars choose, so sidewalks should be installed on these streets first.
 - Around commercial areas.
 - Pedestrian paths instead of sidewalks: not necessarily concrete.
 - Sidewalks behind Blach, in front on Covington.
- Sidewalks on Los Altos Avenue in front of doctor's offices.
- All streets with pedestrian paths.

Participants proposed improving existing neighborhood links and developing new ones:

- Link across Blach School to get around the problem of not being able to go on school grounds during the day.
- Connectors to tie Covington school in at cul de sacs.
- Across the creek, Hetch Hetchy right of way for path connection.
- At the end of Border, people crawl out through a hole in the fence, walk along the shoulder of Foothill expressway, and cross the church parking lot where Border terminates to access the signalized crossing at Foothill, Springer, and Magdalena.

A number of suggestions were made to improve bicycling:

- More bike racks downtown.
 - Include a point where the Hetch Hetchy bike path could be extended.
 - Provide routes to get downtown.
 - Need a way to connect the parks for walking and bicycling.
- The underpass at Loyola Corners on the expressway needs improvement. If this is done, the bikeway could be extended to complete a regional link for a bike route.
- Focus on interconnecting schools including the new school to open next year. Include West Valley Elementary; try to use bridge over creek to connect to the Sunnyvale bike path.
 - Try to identify the Los Altos connection from the Stevens Creek trail.
 - Bike route connecting with Cupertino's plan on streets to Truman High School.
 - Bike trail along Permanente Creek.
 - Added sidewalks in support of schools including key intersections that might lead to a school.

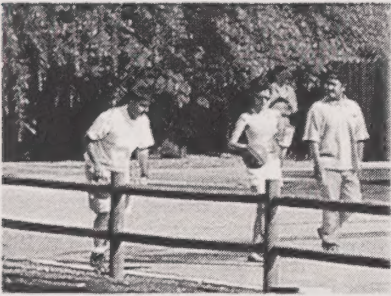
The consultant team incorporated these targeted areas into the general recommendations and selected sample projects that would include some of them. On Monday evening, the Final Presentation was held for the City Council and public. Dan Burden and Patrick Siegman presented the recommendations and sample projects.



Everyone agrees it's vital to preserve the rustic atmosphere of Los Altos. Big, old oaks, sometimes in the middle of the road, are an icon for the region's preferred residential neighborhoods. The city has a tremendous opportunity to enhance its livability and viability within the context of its beautiful natural setting.



Street Design Guidelines



Will it be possible to enhance the walkability and safety of Los Altos streets without destroying the ambience? If sufficient intelligence and care is applied, the answer can be "yes."

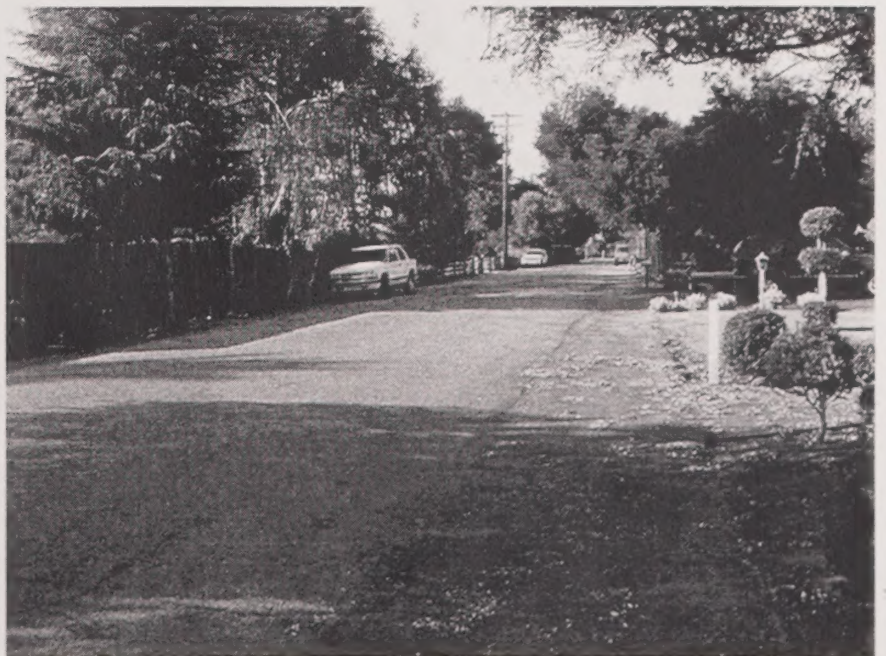
The guidelines presented in this section reflect the recommendations presented in the charrette. Citizens described a safe, pleasant, walkable environment that preserves the unique character of Los Altos, encourages walking and bicycling for transportation, and promotes use of the bus system.

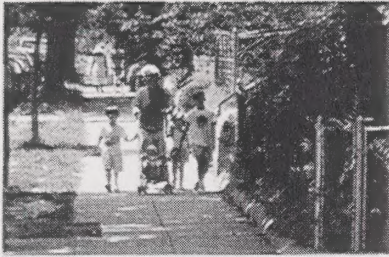
Street elements impacting walkability include: sidewalks, planter strips, parking, bike lanes, travel lanes, trees, housing types and location and medians. Poorly conceived, constructed and maintained streets degrade neighborhoods and communities and lessen their walkability. Low levels of walkability lead to high levels of auto dependency and traffic where we live, work and play. Well conceived, constructed and maintained streets heighten our sense of pride, pleasure and responsibility for our towns, leading to their ultimate success as places for investment, work, festivals, fun, and association.

Sidewalks

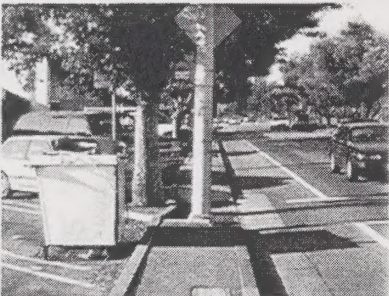
Many Los Altos neighborhoods were built without sidewalks. In most communities, sidewalks are warranted where volumes exceed 500 or more vehicles per day or where speeds exceed 20 m.p.h.. Short, well designed streets with speeds of 20 m.p.h. or less and 300 or fewer cars per day may not require sidewalks. In areas where faster traffic or higher volumes exist, sidewalks are needed. Provision of sidewalks on both sides of streets help reduce unnecessary street crossing.

A sidewalk or other walkway, buffered from the street by a planting strip with landscaping, would in no way detract from the present atmosphere. Tasteful and creative design could enhance the aesthetic appeal while inviting more non-motorized trips.

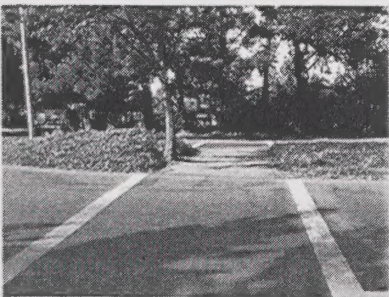




Wider walkways are often more inviting.



Narrow sidewalks, especially with thoughtlessly placed obstacles, discourage walking. If you were pushing a stroller or in a wheelchair here, what are your options?



Walkways can have a number of different surface treatments, including the asphalt shown here. Patterned and colored concrete are successful, low maintenance treatments. Crushed gravel is a permeable treatment which may not offer adequate footing for challenged walkers.

Some residents fear that provision of sidewalks will damage the rural character of their neighborhoods. It is possible, however, to design sidewalks that preserve and enhance the neighborhood, plus provide the added benefit of promoting association, which builds community.

Width: Sidewalk widths can vary. The minimum width for a sidewalk is 5 feet. This is the same width needed for two people to sit together comfortably in a car. Six feet is required when walkways are attached to curbs. Lesser width creates discomfort for two people walking side-by-side. It may be desirable to increase sidewalk width to a minimum of 8 feet within 1/8 mile of schools, significant parks, commercial areas, prominent transit locations, medical buildings and other popular gathering or walking places. Shopping districts require sidewalk widths of 8-16 feet or more for greater pedestrian volumes.

Location: Sidewalks should be buffered from motorized traffic in most locations. Buffers are created through planter strips, on-street parking, bike lanes, or combination of these tools. Monolithic sidewalks, in which the curb and sidewalk are combined, are uncomfortable for people because there is inadequate separation from the travel lane of the roadway.

Materials: Sidewalks materials can vary. Concrete is the most popular, often lasting 50-80 years with light maintenance. Concrete can also be colored, patterned, or otherwise textured in ways that do not negatively impact wheelchairs and other uses. Bricks, paver stones and asphalt are three other popular materials. Each of these materials can last decades, if properly placed, designed and treated. Materials can be varied to create a unique personality or character for a neighborhood.

During the charrette, considerable time was spent discussing alternate walkway surface treatments. There was agreement that walkways did not necessarily have to be concrete. Asphalt might be an alternate treatment. The community needs to have a clear understanding of potential treatments, including the appearance, installation cost, maintenance cost, life expectancy, and suitability for diverse users, including considerations required under the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Edges, Ledges, Walls

Sidewalks need well defined edges on both sides. Typically property edges are grassy areas, but can also be retaining walls, lines of shrubs, low, transparent fences, or other physical elements. Street-side edges can also be grass, or full planter strips. In urban or retail areas, buffers are needed between sidewalks and fronts of buildings. The width of these spaces should be minimum of two feet, which allows space for window shoppers, opening doors and sidewalk enhancements such as flower planters and retail displays.

Planter Strips

Planter strips bring streets to life with the beauty of landscaping and space for attractive street furniture, lighting, and other amenities. Ideally, planter strips are mirrored pairs, creating balance and harmony to streetscapes. Planter strips provide places outside sidewalk space for traffic signs, fire hydrants, utility boxes and other operational elements of streets. Planter strips provide sufficient setback of sidewalks to help with ADA issues at crossing points. Planter strips also can help assure adequate sight triangles at intersections and driveways.

Effective lighting welcomes walkers after dark.

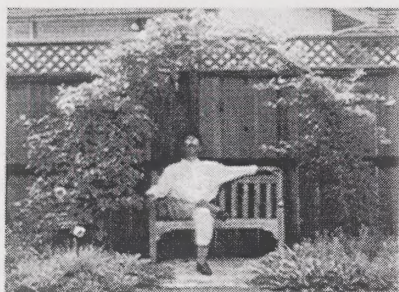


Lighting

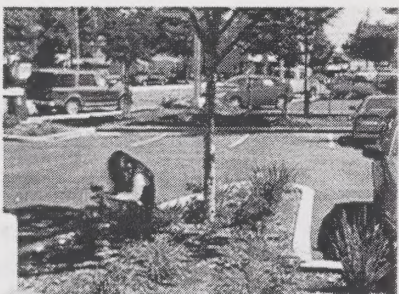
People walking along streets seek strong linear lines during the day and steady flood of low angle light at night. Lighting needs to serve both motorists and walkers. Street lamps enhance many themes, conveying moods reflective of modern downtowns, historic neighborhoods, revitalized industrial areas, mountain or beach communities.

Los Altos already has many fine examples of planter strips, such as this one looking north on San Antonio. Walkers are buffered from motor vehicles by both a bike lane and a wide planter strip with trees. Also note the surface treatment of the walkway.





Who could resist this restful bower?



This worker found a shady place to enjoy her lunch, but it does not look especially comfortable or inviting.



Sitting places are not just for older populations



A beautiful, inviting walkway framed by edges of houses and the mature street trees.

Sitting Places

Frequent opportunities for walkers to sit and rest should be provided. Older populations need sitting places arranged even closer. Sitting places can include both formal areas, such as benches, and informal areas, such as pleasant ledges, sills and other multiuse street elements. Sitting places should include lighting, trash receptacles, shade and other amenities.

Trees

in planter strips or tree wells outside the walking path are often spaced 30-50 feet apart. They are set back 4-6 feet from street edges. Non-mountable curbs are needed in most urban settings and are essential when trees, utilities or other fixed objects are used in planter strips. Healthy trees require wide and long planter strips. Six-foot wide planter strips accommodates most tree species and allow for landmark trees.

Other Landscaping

Shrubs and other plant materials create seasonal or year-round color, edging and attraction to walkways. Native, drought resistant or xeriscape species should be emphasized to minimize maintenance costs and issues. In many locations, especially corners and driveways, low-growth groundcover (2.5 feet or less) is preferred. Perennials add splashes of color and enhance many small areas and gateways.

Utilities

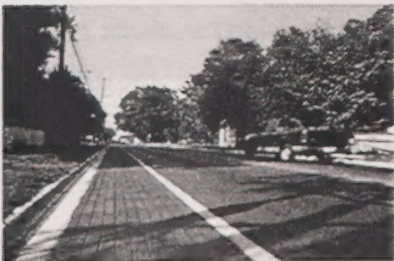
Many communities and most downtowns now choose to place utilities underground in order to allow full canopies, minimize power disruption from storms, and to increase the visual detail of streets. Above ground utilities are most often set in planter strips, especially if sidewalks are placed at the back of public right-of-ways. Many issues surround telephone, cable and power utilities. The most essential issue is minimizing their impact on the visual quality of streets. Utilities can be relocated to alleys, back lots, or utility corridors.

If utility lines cannot be moved, attention should be given to the type of trees that are planted beneath them and the pruning care that these trees receive. Medium size trees with irregular branching habits should be chosen over large formally branched trees (honey locust versus linden). The irregular branching habit allows selective pruning of branches for proper clearances without ruining overall branching habits of the trees. Utility wires in canopy locations can be sleeved to reduce friction. Utilities can also be raised to heights where good tree canopies can hide their negative appearances.



Walkers feel safer and more welcome when they are separated from traffic. In this case, they are protected by both on-street parking and landscaping.

Here is an excellent, creative design in Los Altos that integrates a planting strip with the desirability of on-street parking. These street trees are growing into a beautiful tree canopy.



Parking

America has gone through full cycles of building and removing on-street parking. Most urban spaces were designed not only to move autos and people, but also to store cars in convenient locations. Parked cars on streets create important physical separations between motorists and people walking in neighborhoods, in school areas, in parks and in downtowns.

Width

Parallel parking spaces are set at 8-foot widths. When bike lanes are added, the combined space is usually set at 13 feet. In these cases parking should be reduced to 7 feet. In some rare cases, when combined with bike lanes, parking lanes are reduced to six feet, while bike lanes are increased to 7 feet.

Parallel or Diagonal

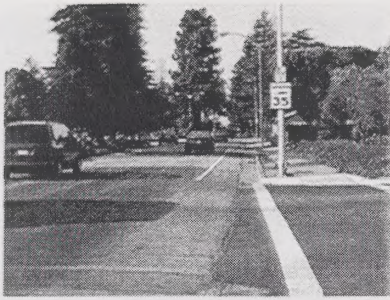
Some drivers are uncomfortable with parallel parking. Parallel parking requires higher levels of driving skill to maneuver into spaces and causes drivers to open car doors and step into traffic. Diagonal parking treatments on streets with limited numbers of driveways increase the amount of parking accommodated from 25-60%. Although exiting drivers are protected, many find backing from spaces into traffic lanes difficult, especially elderly drivers who may have trouble looking to the rear. Reverse-in diagonal parking is proving to be an easier way to park in many towns.

Bike Lanes

Bike lanes or paved shoulders add sight-distance, provide forgiveness to errant drivers, create temporary storage areas for cars while emergency responders go by, and myriad of other benefits.

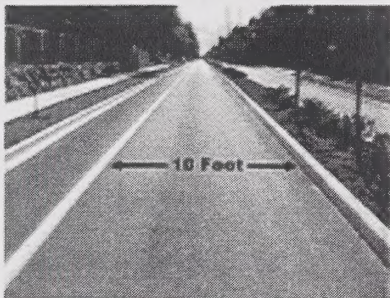
Width: Bike lanes are 6 feet wide from the curb face to the center of the lane stripe. Lesser dimensions are permitted in some circumstances. If lanes are less than 4 feet, they should not be labeled bike lanes. Widths of 2 feet are better than no edge space at all.

Materials: Bike lanes are made either of the same material, depth and base as travel lanes, or may be of a different material to create color contrast as shown in the photo on the left. In some cases, paved shoulders have lesser depth of base material, then reinforced to full depth and base at intersections. Contrasting materials create visual tightening of roadways, which has been shown to reduce speed in some settings.



Travel Lane(s)

Roadway travel lanes must move traffic at uniform speeds, provide flexibility in movement, and provide good, nonslip surfaces. A single urban travel lane can manage 15,000 vehicles daily (1500 in peak hour) to 20,000 vehicles (1800 in peak hour). Interruptions caused by driveways, crossover and intersection traffic greatly reduce carrying capacity of roadway lanes, but can be mitigated by medians and other traffic management techniques.



Width: Communities seeking to reduce speeding and risk to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists are learning to reduce urban roadway lane widths in appropriate locations. Reductions from the typical 12-foot to 11-foot lane width may provide space for bike lanes, wider sidewalks or wider planter strips. But one-foot lane width reductions have no effect on vehicle speeds. Lane reductions to 10 feet create some reductions in speeding, which enhances stopping sight-distance. Lane reductions are often made when bike lanes are added. This extra edge space gives large trucks added room for turning into driveways and intersections. In some cases, 9-foot lanes are appropriate, or necessary, especially in low speed environments.

Speed: Increasing numbers of neighborhoods and communities are insisting that roadway lanes not reward speeders. The combination of lane widths and other geometries and operations that create comfort for 30 m.p.h. speed also maximize roadway capacity. Higher speeds reduce capacity (more separation is needed between cars). The tendency to build in an “extra margin of safety” by creating roadways with design speed 10 m.p.h. higher than posted speeds result in motorists feeling comfortable and therefore driving 10 m.p.h. faster than is safe. This misunderstanding of cause and effect increases noise, risk to drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists.

Medians and Turning Pockets

Medians provide buffers between opposing lanes of traffic and can increase carrying capacity of individual lanes by 30%. They do this by restricting the friction of crossover traffic and lane stoppages at turning points. At major driveways left turn pockets are provided in the median. This treatment enables management of access points along the road so that full access is provided at major generators and partial to no left turn access is provided at lesser driveways. Medians provide pedestrians with safe refuge as they cross streets. They allow space for street beautification and gateway treatments, and they help eliminate aggressive behaviors such as inappropriate passing.



Width: Median widths vary and are often determined by “leftover” space in the right-of-way when all other needs have been met. Medians of 4-8 feet are satisfactory for most pedestrian needs. An 8-foot median is considered sufficient for planting many species of trees and provides requisite setback to meet engineering clearance standards.

Height: Medians are typically designed with curb heights of 6 inches but some Los Altos medians have no curb.

Curb Extensions

Curb Extensions or bulb-outs are extensions of curbing that reduce lane widths. The Los Altos intersection at left is a great example of a bulb-out. Bulb-outs shorten crossing distances for pedestrians. Bulb-outs at intersections also slow turning traffic, provide added space for street amenities, protect parked vehicles, and improve sight lines.

Curb extension can and should, for maximum calming effect, narrow the opening to low traffic volume (1000 cars daily or less) local streets to as little as 20 feet.



Crosswalks

Crosswalk markings are used to alert road users of a pedestrian crossing point and to provide guidance for pedestrians. At signalized locations, signals should be timed to allow people ample time to cross. Minimum timing is not adequate for senior citizens or young children. Highly visible crosswalks are especially important at uncontrolled locations on higher speed or multi-lane roads



Low vehicle speeds, short crossing distances, refuge islands, and frequent crosswalks create a more people-friendly environment that encourages walking. Narrow streets, curb extensions, medians, and traffic calming measures all contribute to a more walkable environment.



Roundabouts

Roundabouts are designed to allow traffic to travel between 15 and 20 m.p.h. through intersections. Drivers circulating in roundabouts have right of way, so entering traffic yields. Drivers enter just as they would turn right from driveways – wait for gaps and enter. At traffic signals vehicles are sometimes delayed even when there is no traffic on cross streets. This inefficiency is eliminated at roundabouts, which can generally improve capacity of an intersection by 30%. Removal of traffic signals at roundabout sites saves maintenance costs of between \$3,000-4,000/year.

Pedestrian crossings are placed one car length away from circulating traffic to ensure drivers' attention is focused on walkers, not turning movements. This placement also encourages people to cross behind vehicles entering roundabouts. Splitter islands, triangular islands at entries to roundabouts, often create refuges for people waiting for crossing gaps.

Roundabouts offer opportunities to provide attractive entries and focal points. Center islands and splitter islands are often landscaped. Roundabouts terminate long street views, and have an effect on calming all approaching streets. The more height and color to landscaping the further out the calming effect, and the safer the island becomes to all approaching motorists.

Roundabouts are good landmarks and often serve as gateways to their communities. Many intersections in Los Altos could benefit from a roundabout. For example, the intersection of San Antonio and West Edith is a possible location, for a gateway to downtown.



Proposed Transportation Vision

- *Los Altos will provide a balanced transportation system that is safe, accessible, people-friendly for all ages and abilities, functional, and efficient.*
- *Individuals and employers will reduce their automobile trips by 10 percent by 2010 and 20 percent by 2020.*
- *Emphasis will be placed on walking, bicycling, public transit, and ride sharing.*
- *Street projects will be designed, reconstructed and maintained to produce low 20-25 m.p.h. speed travel on all local streets, 30 m.p.h. on Avenues (collectors) and 35 m.p.h. on all boulevards and parkways.*
- *Los Altos land use strategies, policies and practices will support this more aesthetic, rustic, green, fit, healthy and less auto dependent community built vision.*
- *Los Altos supports a growing regional planned holistic transportation future and will serve as a leader in built models and enacted policies to achieve an affordable, workable, sustainable transportation system.*

Transport System Recommendations

Charrette participants proposed a transportation vision based on no increase in traffic over current levels. The Circulation Plan of the 1987 Los Altos General Plan acknowledged the desire of community to discourage through traffic in Los Altos. Opinions expressed during the charrette process validated this policy and went a step further. Participants expressed a desire to reduce traffic within their community. This sharply contrasts with practice in some areas to widen streets and intersections to accommodate the steady increase in traffic at levels of service that minimize delay to vehicles.

To mitigate the impact of traffic on Los Altos, a two-pronged approach is recommended. The first is to reduce the number of trips generated locally. To achieve this, there must be a proactive set of policies and programs for trip reductions and incentives to reduce driving. If trip reduction strategies are not implemented, increased congestion will occur.

At the same time, existing traffic must be calmed through the use of active and passive measures. Such measures will slow traffic without increasing congestion. The result will be increased safety and decreased impact on the community.

**Reduce Locally Generated
Traffic Volumes 5%**

Trip Reduction: Sustainable Land Use Practices

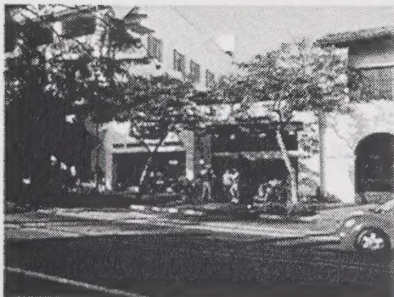
Create Walkable Villages

One strategy that some jurisdictions are implementing is to create walkable villages by providing mixed use, higher density in-fill near existing shopping areas. Provide facilities to encourage walking and bicycling between nearby residential areas and the village. A walkable village is defined as a compact neighborhood that is mixed use, mixed income and limited in area by a walking distance of five minutes from center to edge (a radius of approximately 1350 feet). A walkable village is conceived to fulfill most ordinary human needs, including those of transportation.

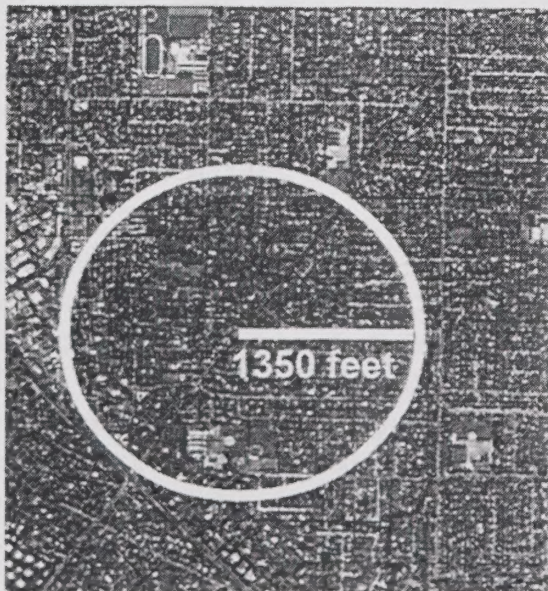
Loyola Street (at right) is one of the few streets passing over Foothill Expressway. As a node for a Walkable Village, the area serves as a hub. The downtown is connected by way of various routes to the surrounding neighborhoods.



Recommended walkable village sites include each of the seven commercial zones in Los Altos: Downtown (an existing example of a walkable village which should be encouraged to grow along the following guidelines); the El Camino Real corridor; Village Court Shopping Center and Sherwood Triangle; Loyola Corners; Rancho Shopping Center; Woodland Plaza and Foothill Plaza. Each of these locations provides existing commercial uses, which may be completed as a village by providing additional housing and other uses to form a complete village.



Each walkable village should seek to fulfill the goal of **balanced uses** within the village, such that under ideal conditions, the daily needs of the residents can be met within the area. Achieving even an approximation to this goal foster community formation, reduces motor vehicles, aids in the establishment of a stable tax base and retail sector, and allows residents who cannot drive to live full lives. As a rule of thumb for North America, **balanced use** includes: 2.4 residents per household, each household requiring 40 square feet of retail and 120 square feet of workplace.



The Walkable Village may be contrasted with auto-oriented Conventional Suburban Development, a planning system characterized by single-use zones with the **housing pod**, the **shopping center**, and the **business park** as its basic elements, requiring frequent and lengthy automobile trips to move from single-use zone to zone.

Most people would consider walking 1350 feet, or about 1/4 mile, instead of taking a motor vehicle.

Convenience retail in each Walkable Village

Increase convenience retail in downtown and other locations

To allow residents to meet routine household needs without driving to distant retail located outside the community, the City should actively regulate uses within commercial areas to achieve a healthy mix of retail and entertainment uses. In addition, the City should actively recruit businesses to provide for basic needs, including pharmacies, hardware, and similar goods.



Some cities have attempted to reduce household costs for food and other items by allowing the concentration of groceries and other retail into 'big box' establishments of 35,000 square feet or more. The result, however, has too often been excessive costs to the community, in the form of traffic woes and high city expenditures needed to mitigate them, and, for private citizens, the typical expenditure of 20% of household budget on transportation. Public and household transportation costs should therefore be reduced, and home values enhanced, by establishing limits on the size of groceries and other potential 'big box' retail uses. We recommend a limit of 20,000 square feet per establishment.

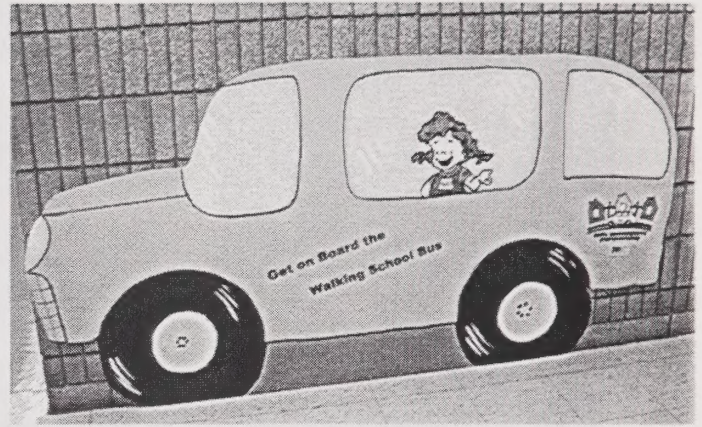
Add school access points

Campuses need to have several points of entry to facilitate access.



Palo Alto's California Avenue neighborhood is a walkable village. It is also an intermodal transit hub.

Guidelines for setting up a walking bus are available from Environment Department, Hertfordshire County Council, County Hall, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8DN, Great Britain, tel 01992 555265, price £5.



Walking School Bus

The Walking School Bus or other parent participation programs for elementary school students living within walking distance need to be emphasized. As explained in the following passage from the United Kingdom's Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, the walking school bus is a practical means of reducing driving trips to schools, while alleviating parent's concerns about their children's safety:

Parents may have difficulty in finding time to walk to school. One option is to arrange a rotating escort - so that two or three families take turns in accompanying children. Some primary schools have taken this idea much further by setting up a 'walking bus'. This is a group of children, walking to school with two parent volunteers - a 'driver', who leads the way, and a 'conductor' at the rear. The walking bus follows a set route, stopping at agreed pick up points in the neighborhood. Volunteers and children are kitted out with reflective clothing and a trolley can be used to carry bags. A number of safety checks can be used in setting up schemes, for example:

- volunteers receive training in road safety and follow a route worked out by a road safety officer
- a ratio of at least one volunteer to eight children is recommended for junior age children
- parents sign a consent form and make sure their child understands a set of road safety guidelines
- volunteers are vetted by police to check they have no criminal background
- arrangements are made for volunteers to be covered by third party public liability insurance, for example through the local authority.



School Sidewalk Program

Dedicate funding of at least \$250,000 per year to the construction of sidewalks at schools.

Provide sidewalks

Provide sidewalks within one-quarter mile of all schools, parks, and commercial districts. Implement a program in which private and public funding is used to provide frequent resting places for senior citizens.



Trip Reduction: Improved Transit System

Participants in the Valley Transportation Authority's Eco-Pass program get unlimited rides on all VTA buses, light rail, ADA paratransit service, and now also on the Caltrain commuter rail line linking Los Altos to Gilroy and San Jose. Employers purchase Eco Passes for all full-time employees or residents, while paying one low price. Rather than paying annual bus pass fees of nearly \$700 annually, Individuals can pay a fee of as low as \$40 per person per year. With the implementation of the Rapid Bus Transit line along El Camino through Los Altos, and the funded increases in Caltrain service, this service will become increasingly valuable

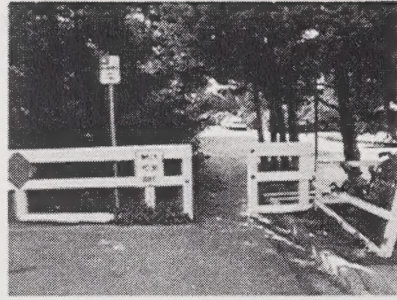
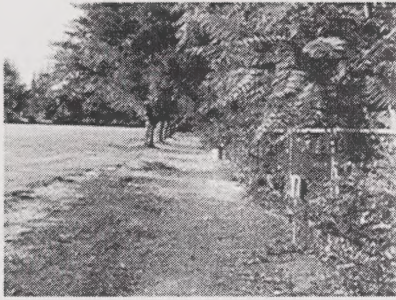
Improved Transit Stops

Current transit stops are largely provided and maintained by the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA), and are often minimal, consisting of little more than a signpost in the dirt. To encourage transit ridership and reflect the unique character of Los Altos, the City should establish a budget to supplement the existing VTA budget for transit stops, and in cooperation with the transit agency, improve the stops. This should include:

- Add, at a minimum, a sidewalk and bench at all stops;
- Add shelters, bicycle racks, lighting, trash cans and other amenities at heavily used stops;
- Create design guidelines for transit stops that reflect the rural heritage of Los Altos.

Finally, the successful Adopt-A-Stop programs employed by many cities to provide and maintain transit shelters and benches should be emulated by the City.





Adding links for walkers and bikes is a vital element of trip reduction. When it becomes more convenient to make a self-propelled trip rather than a motorized one, traffic will be reduced. Neighborhood links are especially important around schools and parks.

Cash-out parking at all employment centers (above 50 employees)

Current development practices in many cities require that private landowners provide ample free parking for all employees (a requirement whose cost in Silicon Valley now often exceeds \$2000 per employee per year), but have no corresponding requirement to ensure that employees who do not drive receive an equal financial benefit. Parking cash-out programs have proven to be the single most powerful, flexible and adaptive measure that cities can take to quickly reduce traffic levels, and must not be overlooked.

Future public works projects

Future projects should fully support walking and bicycling in accordance with Street Design Guidelines by adopting policies and budgets to ensure compliance.

Reduce Speeding and Uncivil Driving Practices

Traffic Calming: Reduce Speeding and Uncivil Driving Practices

As important as trip reduction is the calming of traffic for safety and quality of life. Until trips are reduced, and after trips are reduced, traffic must still be managed. Neighborhood traffic management to discourage cut through traffic and reduce speeds can be achieved using a variety of traffic calming treatments. This report segregates traffic calming treatments into two categories, passive and active.

Passive measures are primarily visual treatments that do not significantly intrude into the motorist travel space or change roadway dimensions in any way. This category includes trees, landscaping treatments, on-street parking, drainage swales, bike lanes, and signing.

Active traffic calming measures are treatments that require the vehicle to go around or over an installation in the street. Curb extensions, speed humps and tables, diverters, and roundabouts are examples of active measures.



Passive Traffic Calming

Resident Tree Planting Program

Incentives such as free trees or planting, assistance with selection, and advice on maintenance should be offered by the city. Shaded neighborhoods can be up to thirteen degrees cooler. Many resources are available for urban forestry efforts. The USDA Forest Service is just one of the Federal, State, and Local governmental agencies supporting planting of trees.

Neighborhood Revitalization Program

The community should consider a Neighborhood Revitalization Program to promote implementation of street designs that support the vision of lower speeds, reduced cut-through traffic, and increased biking and walking trips. For example, residents could circulate a petition to indicate that 60% of those residing in the affected block(s) want to participate in the program. Once qualified, residents may attend an evening presentation, where they learn about street improvements covered under the program. Those improvements include elements such as:

- Passive traffic calming: swales, trees
- Trimming of overgrown vegetation
- Active traffic calming
- Sidewalks: minimum five foot
- Curbs and gutters, or swales on street edges

Passive School Traffic Calming Program

Develop a 'toolbox' of active and passive traffic calming treatments applicable to various neighborhood school situations

Invoke Active Enforcement

Enforce speed limits. Provide a hotline for residents to report repeated speeding and aggressive driving behavior.



Train School Aged Children

Bicycle and walking safety skills training program in schools that provide hands-on instruction for students.

Coordinate Public Works Projects

Incorporate traffic calming treatments as needed to promote speeds compliant with posted limits.

Develop Model Project Corridor

Evaluate the scope, mission, funding levels, and treatment techniques of the existing neighborhood traffic calming program. One approach adopted by other communities is to require a 25% match from future participating neighborhoods. Develop, build and evaluate a traffic calmed corridor. Collect speed and volume data before treatments, during temporary installation, and after final installation.

Integrate traffic calming in all street reconstruction activities

Install raised table crosswalks, bulb outs, refuge islands, in-road slow zone signing, and other traffic calming treatments as needed to attain motorist compliance with school zone speed limits and pedestrian rights-of-way.

Double Traffic Fines in School Zones

Punish unsafe drivers by raising penalties in sensitive areas like school zones.

Residents must realize that they themselves are the source of considerable traffic. The less motorized trips they take, the less traffic there will be. Less trips means fewer cars, trucks, and SUVs on the road. Fewer vehicles means less environmental impact in terms of noise, pollution, and degraded quality of life.

When walkways are sufficiently enhanced, more people will use them. As links between neighborhoods serve as network components, people will realize that walking and biking are attractive alternatives to running errands in a car.



This walkway appears neither convenient nor safe. Still, the adult prefers the rough, narrow walkway over the danger of walking in the street.



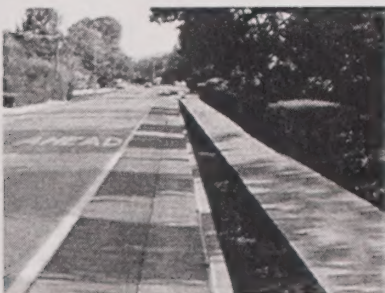
Sample Projects

Project One: Walkways

The first sample project addresses community sidewalk concerns. Strong feelings about pedestrian walkways are evident. Many feel that the lack of sidewalks represented a critical aspect of Los Altos' rustic or rural atmosphere. Others feel that safety is more important than aesthetic considerations. The consultant team recommends installation of curbs and sidewalks, especially at and near schools, parks, and business districts.



These photos compare a walking route before and after it is separated from the roadway by a planting strip. The walkway would not necessarily have to be concrete as depicted in the simulation.



The community also suggested a number of sidewalk priorities, including installation of sidewalks near schools and along main roads. A site along Springer is typical of a Los Altos collector and was selected as the first sample project. Walkways should be separated from the street and curb by a planting strip. The strip serves as a buffer from traffic, improving the walker's feeling of safety while improving the quality of the walking experience. If possible the planting strip should include landscaping features such as shrubs and trees. Shrubs and trees have the additional benefit of serving as passive traffic calming measures.

Project Two: Walkways and Road Diets

The photos on the next page illustrate Project Two. One practical objection to installation of sidewalks is that the homeowners often have substantial investments in mature landscaping bordering the street. Not only would they be understandably reluctant to remove such planting, but the removal is counter-productive to traffic calming efforts. At the same time, many of the streets in Los Altos are much

Walkways and planting strips can be installed without affecting mature landscaping.



wider than they need to be. Another sample project shows how sidewalks with planting strips and curbs could be installed without affecting existing landscaping. The overly wide street is simply narrowed by the width of the sidewalk.

The intersection of Austin and Juarez in South Los Altos is the site of Project Two. Austin remains wide enough for the small amount of traffic even after some of the roadway is taken up with the proposed improvements. An additional benefit of the sidewalk installation is the improved sight distance at the intersection. The new sidewalk and planting strip serve the same function as a bulb-out, allowing vehicles to see and be seen. The proposed sidewalk installation also shortens the distance pedestrians must cover to cross the street.



The photos illustrate Project Three. The street is so wide that it can easily accommodate sidewalks and planter strips. The lower photo is a simulation.



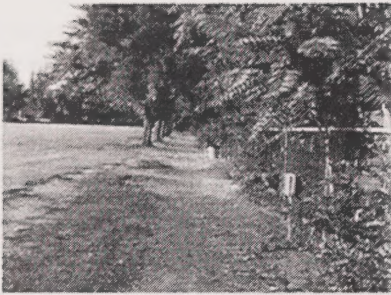
Project Three: Walkways and Road Diets

Project three is another example of this kind of improvement. This typical Los Altos corner has no sidewalks. Sidewalks with planting strips could be installed to make walking safer and more enjoyable. At the same time, driving safety is improved because of the greater sight distances and the lower speed caused by the narrower roadway. Broadening the walkway and planting strip is a type of curb extension. By extending the curb into the roadway the road is narrowed, providing a calming effect. Pedestrian safety is also enhanced. The result is visually more appealing as well.



The photo at right shows a diagonal curb ramp which does not follow ADA Accessibility Guidelines.

Both this and the previous example include properly installed ADA ramps. On each corner, there are two ramps situated perpendicularly. Such an installation aims across each intersection, in line with the crosswalks. In many situations, diagonal curb ramps are less costly to install, but they can create potential safety and mobility problems for pedestrians. If diagonal ramps are installed, the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) state that the design must allow at least four feet at the base of the ramp for wheelchairs to maneuver into the crosswalk.



This neighborhood link should be upgraded to an all-weather surface treatment. Suitable illumination would also make it inviting and safe after dark.

Project Four: Links and Connections

Sample Project Four addressed the community's desire to reduce local vehicular trips by improving existing neighborhood links and developing new ones. These links allow walkers and cyclists to connect up with destinations by routes not accessible to vehicular traffic. Links allow access between cul-de-sacs, the back and sides of school properties, neighborhoods, and business districts.

An unpaved neighborhood link already exists at the Covington School site. This sample project proposes upgrading the existing walkway by paving and landscaping. Such an improvement would increase the desirability of using the route even in rainy or wet conditions. The upgrade also improves safety by providing more secure footing under all conditions. Modest pedestrian-scale lighting could increase usage after dark.



The canopy provided by mature trees provides many benefits, both as a passive traffic calming measure and as an enhancement to the environment.

Project Five: Tree Canopies

Los Altos has many wonderful mature trees. More trees should be planted to help provide passive traffic calming in the years to come. The tree-lined street reflects many Americans' vision of a residential neighborhood. The fourth sample project shows why planting trees is so desirable. This sample project demonstrates how passive treatments including swales and trees, can be used to treat streets similar to those in the Wakefield Terrace neighborhood. Careful selection of the trees species and placement in planter strips near the roadway will create a tree canopy that will help slow vehicles, provide shade and reduced energy costs. The shade contributes to a pleasant walking environment, a key element in promoting vehicle trip reduction.

(For additional information: Center for Urban Forest Research, wcufre.ucdavis.edu/urban_forest_benefits_from.htm)

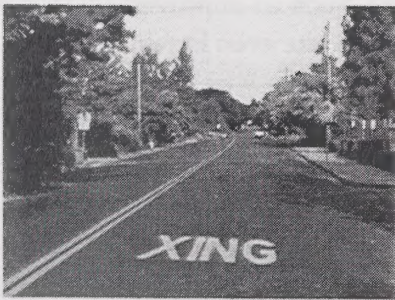


Project Six: Swales

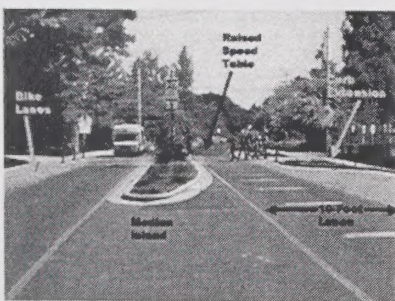
Swales are depressions which may be wet at times. The use of swales along streets narrows overly wide thoroughfares, slows traffic without congestion, provides more distance between pedestrians and traffic, and may help with drainage of storm run-off. Because the swales are unlined water can percolate directly into the ground. Of course no curb or gutters are needed, saving money that can be used for walkways and landscaping. Use of swales could help reinforce Los Altos' rustic image compared to traditional concrete curbs and gutters.

Project Seven: Active Traffic Calming

Project seven demonstrates a number of active traffic calming measures at the Loyola Elementary School on Berry. Presently the street is considerably wider than it needs to be. Motorists drive faster on wider streets, resulting in speeds that are inappropriately high. The danger to children in front of the school is considerable. The measures suggested here include narrowing of traffic lanes to ten feet, installation of bike lanes in conjunction with the narrowing, installation of a median refuge island, speed table crossing, and a curb extension.

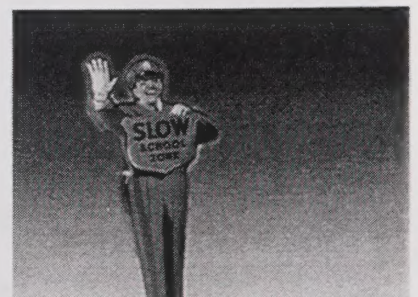


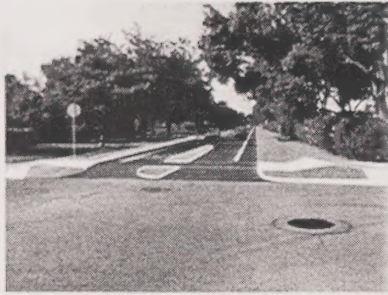
The narrowing of lanes causes traffic to slow considerably, greatly improving the likelihood that traffic can and will stop to yield for pedestrians. The median island both helps to narrow the lane width and provides a refuge for pedestrians in the middle of the street. In case traffic does not permit a child to cross all the way, he or she can safely stop on the median island until it's safe to proceed. The curb extension helps in a similar manner. At the same time it helps reduce the roadway width, it reduces the distance walkers must cross. They are less vulnerable as a result.



Well-trained School Crossing Guards can be effective in enhancing pedestrian safety. One of the recommendations is to implement a Certified School Crossing Guard Program at all schools, such as Florida has (*Florida School Crossing Program, Florida DOT, 904 943-5600*). Finally, mid-street signs reminding drivers to yield are being effectively used in many locales, including Palo Alto.

The photos above show an overly wide street in front of the school. The lower photo identifies various components described above. The photos at right are examples of mid-street signs.





A simulation of Project Eight, looking north on Truman.

Project Eight: Active Traffic Calming

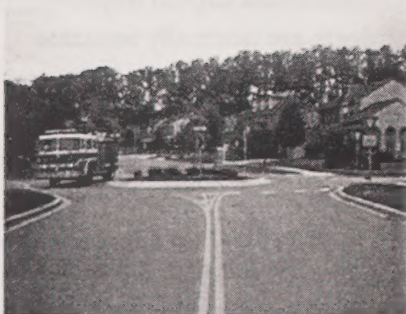
Project Eight also suggests active traffic calming near a school site. Oak School is located near the intersection of Oak and Truman. The large high school on Truman creates considerable traffic at the same time children are walking to school along Oak. Truman is much too wide, inducing the traffic it carries from Fremont Avenue to travel at higher speeds. The same narrowing of lanes proposed in the previous project would provide the same benefits at this intersection. The painting of bicycle lanes helps to narrow the visual width of the traffic lane. Installing a refuge island median at the crosswalk will discourage high speed turns from Oak onto Truman. At the same time, it shortens the crossing distance for pedestrians while providing a safe mid-street refuge.



The intersection of Springer and Berry, with a simulated roundabout.

Project Nine: Active Traffic Calming

Roundabouts are an important means of easing traffic congestion. Roundabouts are circular intersections which require the entering traffic to yield to the circulating traffic. Ideally, motorists never have to come to a complete stop. Low speeds are ensured by appropriate geometric curvature and channelized or "splitter" islands at entry points. Pedestrian crossings are placed at least one car length from the entry point. Roundabouts are often used to replace stop signs or traffic signals and typically operate with lower vehicle delays than other intersection forms and control types. At intersections with stop signs, vehicles must stop completely before proceeding. A roundabout harmonizes the traffic at low speeds and sends it on its way. Stopping and starting at intersections is a primary cause of congestion because it creates turbulence in the traffic stream. When traffic is present on one or more of the approaches to a roundabout, traffic within the queues usually continues to move. This is typically more tolerable to drivers than stopping or waiting.



Emergency responders generally prefer roundabouts over other forms of traffic calming. Larger vehicles, such as buses and fire trucks, can negotiate the gentle curvature by using the truck apron that surrounds the center. Splitter islands serve as a median to those entering and leaving the roundabout. The splitter islands and curb extensions work together to narrow the roadway while channeling the vehicle in the optimum direction at reduced speeds of around fifteen miles per hour.

This project would benefit Los Altos considerably in a number of ways. In addition to reducing congestion, noise, pollution, and waste are reduced. Pedestrian safety is enhanced because the elements of the roundabout slow traffic, reduce the crossing distance and provide refuge islands for pedestrians.

Recommended Funding Strategies

Funding Sources

What are the possible funding sources for rebuilding Los Altos streets? Recent changes in federal and state law have made more transportation funds more available, pushed most decision-making power over those funds from the state highway agencies to the local and regional level, and made funding categories more flexible, so that funds once reserved for highway expansion may now be used for traffic calming, bike lanes and sidewalks. Meanwhile, many jurisdictions are finding creative ways to leverage local funds and thereby finance projects that make streets safer and more beautiful.

Local Funds

Several cities have successfully added traffic calming, sidewalks, curbs and similar elements to other projects which involve digging up or rebuilding portions of a street: storm drain and sewer improvements, utility undergrounding projects, and routine street repaving and reconstruction are all possibilities. The greater the extent of the reconstruction, the greater the possibilities are for adding elements such as bulb-outs, medians and roundabouts at little cost. In some cities, combining traffic calming with other street work has allowed building traffic calming features for as little as 5% additional cost. In addition, communities avoid the disruption, noise and expense of repeatedly digging up a street and detouring traffic. However, such combination projects are not always feasible, and may require extensive coordination between departments and capital improvement projects whose schedules and budgets are normally separate.

Street Resurfacing or Reconstruction

Many cities have incorporated traffic calming into street reconstruction projects. In Venice, Florida, for example, officials brought new life to a dilapidated downtown by adding \$80,000 to a main street resurfacing project: intersection bulb-outs, mid-block bulb-outs and median crossings, and crosswalks of colorful paver stones were all included. There may be opportunities to apply this general approach in Los Altos as well. In particular, Santa Clara County's transportation sales tax measures will provide a substantial amount of funding for city street maintenance and rehabilitation over the next few years, in addition to the funding normally provided from the City's general fund.

Sewer and Storm Drain Projects

In Fort Pierce, Florida, three blocks of new sidewalks together with a new roundabout were added to a long-planned sewer project. Built as concurrent construction, the sidewalks and roundabout added just \$15,000 to the cost of the project. Similarly, Seattle has added planted medians to several streets at little or no extra cost as part of sewer upgrade projects. In the Los Altos area, construction costs are far above the national average but the same principle applies: by building traffic calming features as concurrent construction, savings are possible. Since the storm drain system is largely buried beneath the City's streets, any planned improvements might be combined with the implementation of traffic calming measures. Opportunities may arise on various residential arterial, collector and local streets where traffic calming is desired.



Utility Under-grounding

Utility under-grounding projects often require extensive digging, demolition and replacement. Utility under-grounding typically requires the installation of new conduit, bases and often poles for streetlights (when the lights are on luminaires mounted on the overhead utility poles). Substantial savings may be possible by installing pedestrian-scale lighting (if it is desired for a street) at the same time, rather than digging up the street a second time to provide conduits and bases for pedestrian scale lighting, which typically requires more lights, placed closer together than the existing highway-scale lighting.

Development Impact Fees

San Jose and other cities have required that developers install traffic calming measures and pedestrian features as part of overall specific development agreements. On a more systematic basis, however, it is feasible for cities to levy impact fees on new developments to fund bicycle, pedestrian and traffic calming infrastructure. Generally, development impact fees are "scheduled charges applied to new development to generate revenue for the construction or expansion of capital facilities located outside the boundaries of new development (i.e. off-site) that benefit the contributing development." As described in *A Practitioner's Guide to Development Impact Fees* (Nicholas, Nelson & Juergensmeyer, 1991), "Where capital facilities are not adequate, permitting development to occur is contrary to the responsibility of a local government to protect public health, safety and welfare." In order to protect public health and safety, then, the courts have held that cities may charge impact fees in order to recoup from each new development a proportionate share of the cost of providing adequate capital facilities — including the provision of safe streets.

In the specific case of traffic calming measures, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, a city may proceed as follows. As the *Practitioner's Guide* explains, "A properly created impact fee system begins with a good



comprehensive plan backed up with an equally good capital improvements program (CIP).” City Comprehensive Plan policies should clearly establish the city’s desire to protect public safety and welfare by providing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and using traffic calming measures to create safe streets. Next, facilities services standards must be adopted. Just as a city may establish measures of adequate roadway capacity for motor vehicles: for example, that no more than 40 seconds of average delay at rush hour (i.e. Level of Service ‘D’) is acceptable for any intersection, a city may establish standards for bicycling and walking. For example, the standards might specify that:

- 5’ wide sidewalks are required on both sides of any roadway carrying more than 2500 vehicles per day; or it could require that walks are required on all streets belonging to the City’s designated pedestrian network.
- all arterial and collector streets shall provide bicycle lanes;
- the capital facilities specified in the City’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans must be completed;
- local residential streets shall operate at an 85th percentile speed of 20 m.p.h. or less; and collector and arterial streets shall operate at 30 m.p.h. or less.

Once the standards for a community have been set, the cost of achieving those standards must be determined (for example, the cost per mile of new sidewalks, multiplied by the miles of sidewalks needed). Finally, a proportionate share of that cost may be levied on new developments, in the form of an impact fee. This is likely to be the most difficult step. For roadway expansions, parks, public schools, parks, sewers and various other facilities, the methods of determining fair shares are well-established. However, few if any cities have established regular impact fees for bicycle and pedestrian facilities or for traffic calming measures, since until recently many communities have largely overlooked bicycling and walking needs. Nonetheless, the same principles apply: a fee schedule may be developed to raise a proportionate share of the cost of the needed capital facilities from new development. For a sidewalk impact fee, for example, a proportionate fee might be based on the number of pedestrian trips expected to be generated by the new development, or on the number of automobile trips generated (since reaching a certain level of automobile traffic on a street may require the construction of a sidewalk in order to meet a city’s standard for protecting pedestrian safety).



State and Federal Transportation Funds

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) increased federal funding for transportation by over 40%. On a simple per capita basis, Los Altos' share of these state and federal funds will exceed \$23 million over the period from 1999 to 2005. However, funds are distributed on a partially competitive, not a simple per capita basis, and most of the funding priorities for the next four years have already been set in the previously prepared Bay Area Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (RTIP). Now, however, is the time to begin work on the plans that will dictate the next round of funding.

In sharp contrast to previous years, TEA-21 and California's recent Senate Bill 45 (SB 45) make traffic calming projects eligible for most federal and state sources of transportation dollars. The specific programs that can fund traffic calming are described in greater detail below. Essentially, these funds are accessed in two ways:

- 1) A few programs, such as the Hazard Elimination/Safety program or the Transportation for Livable Communities fund are administered at the state level or regional level. Municipalities apply directly to the state (to the California Department of Transportation, or 'Caltrans') or regional transportation planning agency (in the Bay Area, to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission) for these competitive funding pots. Those cities which have set clear priorities and have Council-approved plans in hand can often secure a larger share of funds.

- 2) For most transportation funding, the process begins at the local level, where city and county transportation and public works departments often draw up a list of project priorities. City staff then gather at the county level (in Los Altos' case, at the Valley Transportation Authority) to negotiate priorities. After approval by the Board of the appropriate county transportation agency, each of the nine Bay Area counties then forwards its project list to the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Bay Area's regional transportation planning agency, where the project lists are reviewed, approved and then assembled to create the latest version of the Regional Transportation Improvement Program.

Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Funded at \$8.3 billion over the 1999-2005 period, this program represents the lion's share of California's state and federal transportation dollars. Under California Senate Bill 45, 75% of the funds in this program are now controlled by the regional and county transportation agencies. This 75% share, called the Regional Improvement Program (RIP), contains four years of funding worth billions of dollars, and is updated every two years. Senate Bill 45 declares that RIP funds may be used for, among other things, improving local roads, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and safety: in short, for construction of any of the alternatives suggested for Los Altos projects.

Transportation for Livable Communities Program

Funded at \$9 million annually for the nine county Bay Area, this innovative program was created by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission to fund community-oriented transportation projects. The Commission funded it by setting aside the 75% regional share of the Transportation Enhancements program and a portion of the region's Surface Transportation Program funds (see below). Project sponsors are encouraged to submit proposals that improve bicycling and walking, encourage transit ridership through transit-oriented development, and generally improve neighborhood livability.

Transportation Enhancements

This federal program, amounting to \$60 million per year for California, funds a wide variety of smaller community-oriented projects, including renovation of historic transportation facilities, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and Main Street revitalization programs. Seventy-five percent is programmed by local regional transportation planning agencies, and twenty-five percent is programmed by Caltrans at the state level. (In the Bay Area, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission has chosen to place the 75% regional share into the Transportation for Livable Communities program, described previously). For Los Altos, these funds could be used to help fund many of the suggested projects, including sidewalk and crosswalk improvements, medians, lighting and intersection safety improvements.

Surface Transportation Program

This federal fund is worth \$500 million per year in California, and is usually programmed once every two to three years by the regional transportation planning agencies. STP funds are highly flexible funds for all sorts of capital projects, and could be used to fund any of the suggested street design projects.

Hazard Elimination and Safety Set-Aside

This federal safety funding provides \$60 million per year for California, and is controlled by Caltrans. One-third of the funding is only available for state highways, one-third is locally-oriented and may be used for traffic calming, bicycle and pedestrian projects, and one-third is currently directed into the Safe Routes to School program.

Safe Routes to School: (Assembly Bill 1475)

This program currently directs \$20 million per year in funding to projects providing safe passage to children walking or bicycling to school, including building bicycle paths and lanes, constructing sidewalks where none exist, and implementing "traffic calming" programs in neighborhoods around schools. However, the program will sunset at the end of this year, unless Senate Bill 10 (Soto), which proposes to extend the program for an additional three years, becomes law.



Bicycle Transportation Account (BTA)

This state fund, administered by the Caltrans Bicycle Facilities Unit, can be used for numerous items that aid cyclists, including median crossings, bicycle/pedestrian signals and bike lanes. SB 1772, which takes effect July 2001, increased funding for the BTA to \$7.2 million per year for Fiscal Years 2001/02 through 2005/06. After 2005/06, annual BTA funding will be \$5 million. For Fiscal Year 2001/02, the maximum an applicant may receive is \$1.8 million. BTA funds pay a maximum of 90 percent of the cost of an eligible project.

Environmental Enhancement & Mitigation

This state fund is worth \$10 million annually. Applications are accepted yearly, usually in November, by the California State Resources Agency in Sacramento. Two categories could be appropriate for improving Los Altos streets: the Highway Landscaping and Urban Forestry category is designed to offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide by funding the planting of street trees and other suitable plants. The Roadside Recreation category has been used by cities to fund parks and trailheads along streets.

Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality

This federal fund, worth over \$300 million per year for California, is distributed to regional transportation planning agencies in areas with air quality problems for projects that improve air quality and reduce congestion. Bicycle and pedestrian improvements are specifically eligible for these funds.

Federal Transit Funds

California receives close to \$1 billion annually in federal transit funds, and these funds may now be used not just for buses and trains, but also for projects which improve transit stops and bicycle/pedestrian access to them.



U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



C124877413

